



Glassboys face tough first round trip to Dover

FA CUP FERRY TALE LIVES ON

By Richard Guttridge

STOURBRIDGE Football Club have been left disappointed after missing out on a glamour tie against a Football League side in the first round proper of the FA Cup.

The luck of the draw went against the Glassboys who were handed an unwelcome away trip to fellow non-league outfit Dover Athletic.

Supporters had been dreaming of a plum tie against the likes of previous winners Sheffield United, Wigan or Coventry City as reward for defeating local rivals Kidderminster Harriers – but it wasn't to be.

They instead face a tough assignment on the Kent coast against a Dover side currently lying third in the Vanarama National League.

But bosses insist the team will go into the game determined to keep their cup run going.

Club secretary Clive Eades said: "It will be a tough game, Dover are doing very well in the National League. But it's a game of football and we all know anything can happen."

"We will be going there to win but if we can get a replay it will be harder for Dover to come up to the West Midlands on a Tuesday night than for us to go down there on a Friday night or Saturday morning."

Despite the anti-climax of the draw, the town is buzzing with Stourbridge in the first round for the fourth time in seven years, with the possibility of facing league giants still very much alive. There are also the financial rewards to consider. The Glassboys had already netted more than £10,000 before the win over Kidderminster put another £12,500 into the coffers. Victory over Dover would see them awarded £18,000.

Mr Eades said: "It's vitally important, not only for Stourbridge Football Club but for all non-league clubs to have the potential to get to the first round proper. Fortunately we have got there four times and got to the second round twice and it has enabled us to improve the facilities at Ambicote and enabled the football club to progress and grow."

"Hopefully a few of the supporters who were at the Walsall game a few years ago and came back for Kidderminster would have noticed the facilities have improved since and will want to come back again."

● Journey – see back page

HOPES OVER MARKET BECOMING SUNDAY BEST



Dudley Market traders Jo Forrest, Jessie Powell, and Wendy Farmer on Wendy's baby stall

TRADERS are hopeful its promising Sunday Market start will continue until Christmas after a successful opening last weekend.

For the first time in its long history, Dudley Market welcomed shoppers last Sunday and stall-holders hope interest will continue to grow as the weeks progress.

Deputy Mayor Councillor Mohammed Hanif said it was an excellent move forward. It comes after traders took over responsibility for

the day-to-day running of the market from Dudley Council.

Len Lenihan, chairman of Dudley Market Traders Ltd which has taken over running of the market, said it had been a strong start.

"To say it was the very first time, it went really well and everyone is very confident it will grow as it gets closer to Christmas," he said. "Everyone is very pleased with the response. Now we can build on it."

Mr Lenihan said around half of

the available stalls were operating on Sunday. This is expected to increase as the weeks go on. Shopper Sarah Townend, aged 50, from Dudley, said: "I think it will be a real boost for traders and visitors."

Customer Dawn Cope, 33, said: "I think a lot of people will take advantage once more people know about it."

Trader Wendy Farmer, who sells clothing for youngsters, said it had been a really promising start.



Dawn Cope and family with face painter Steph Craig

TRIBUTES

Crippling disease takes father's life

A GRANDFATHER struck down with Motor Neurone Disease has died – just seven months since diagnosing himself after watching the Stephen Hawking biopic.

Paul Whyley, aged 62 began to realise he had the same debilitating condition as Professor Hawking when he watched the Oscar-winning The Theory of Everything.

Jayne, the grandfather of four's devastated wife of 40 years, was forced to leave her job to care for her husband, and paid tribute. He died on October 17. His funeral



Paul Whyley

service was taking place yesterday (Wednesday) at Stourbridge Crematorium.

Mrs Whyley, 59, of Hagley, said she had been astonished by the outpouring of support from friends and family after her husband's passing. She said: "Paul was amazing throughout the whole process, he never ever complained. He just took it in his stride."

Before his diagnosis in March, Mr Whyley had noticed difficulty controlling his fingers, problems moving his arm and had suffered a number of trips and falls. Doctors failed to come up with a diagnosis. However, when he saw the film about Hawking's life, he began to realise he had the same symptoms and tests with a neurologist confirmed Mr Whyley's fears.

The father of two died with his wife and daughter Lauren at his bedside. His eldest daughter Heather, 36, flew back from Colombia the day after her father's death.

PETITION

Chance to question council over cuts

AN online petition has been launched opposing plans to close Dudley Museum and Art Gallery under cost-cutting measures.

The petition, already signed by more than 700 people, has been launched at website 38 Degrees.

Cuts include closing Dudley Museum and Art Gallery and cutting opening hours at libraries, with jobs set to be lost.

The public can quiz council leader Pete Lowe about proposals tonight (Thursday) from 6-7pm via a special online forum.

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INSIDE:

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Civic society bid to boost town pride

A NEW civic society could be set up in Dudley in a bid to promote and protect its heritage.

Steve Briscoe has revealed plans to create a Civic Society for Dudley with hopes of bringing the community together to discuss ideas for regeneration.

Speaking about the plans, he explained how he wants to portray Dudley in a positive light. He said: "Dudley does not get enough recognition and it would be great if we could get all businesses and main attractions working together to form a group and promote all the great things about the town. We do not want this to be a political entity and we want no negativity.

"We want to gather ideas of what people want to see happen in the town. So far I have had interest from a few people, including a businessman and Councillor Pete Lowe, who thinks this would be a really good idea."

Plans of holding workshops and events in the town are also in the pipeline.

Mr Briscoe, who is also chairman of the Friends of Buffery Park, spoke of how he felt passionate about giving the town a voice.

"A town like Dudley with all its rich history leaves us with the question as to why it hasn't had a civic society for a long time," he said.

"Lots of local people are proud of the town and

we want to get people together to celebrate what's good about it. Ultimately, the aim is to provide an independent voice for our town and its people."

Dudley town centre has been the focus of major regeneration over the past few years.

The £10 million Castle Hill project, using European funding, was hailed as the start of a new era with the zoo, Black Council Living Museum and Dudley Canal and Tunnel envisaged as a major national tourist attraction.

A £6.7m Dudley Market revamp also saw traders move into new stalls this year.

For more information on the proposed civic society visit dudleycivsociety.com

Restaurants to come at Castlegate leisure park

WORK on a £5 million project to build four new restaurants and cafes in Dudley will start next month, the developer has announced.

Around 80 jobs will be created by the scheme which will see a Hungry Horse pub, a Costa Coffee cafe and a KFC restaurant built on vacant land at Dudley's Castlegate Business Park, off Birmingham Road.

A fourth unit will also be constructed on the site, owned by the Homes and Communities Agency, with bosses at developer Stoford hoping to attract another restaurant to the complex.

Stoford director Dominic Stokes said: "This is an exciting project which supports the development of Castle Hill and Dudley town centre by providing complementary visitor facilities.

Regeneration

"We expect work to begin on site in November and the businesses could be trading by summer 2016."

Dudley Council leaders have welcomed the plans as a boost to the ongoing regeneration of Dudley.

Councillor Khurshid Ahmed said: "This scheme provides job opportunities for local people while complementing the exciting and innovative developments we have already put in place or are in the pipeline in Dudley town centre, including the multi-million pound investment in the market place and the expansion of Dudley College.

"Our ambition is to make Castle Hill a major regional destination."

MP backs foreign nurse visa move

A MOVE to lift visa restrictions for nurses recruited for the winter months in the UK has been welcomed by a Black Country MP.

Nurses are to be added to the immigration Shortage Occupation List in order to allow the hiring of more staff from overseas, under the Government plans. This means nurses from countries outside of Europe will have their visa applications prioritised.

Nurses will also be exempt from new restrictions which mean migrants from outside Europe must earn £35,000 or more if they are to be allowed to continue working in the UK after six years.

Stourbridge MP Margot James said: "As we approach the winter months, it is vital we ensure that our hospitals can recruit any extra staff they need."

Guerilla gardeners come to the rescue

A GROUP of volunteer gardeners have tackled an overgrown footpath to help a disabled man get around in his wheelchair.

Guerilla Gardeners, founded by Dave Mundon, came to the aid of Bill Weston, from Bissell Way, Brierley Hill.

Saudi cash will fund college's development

DUDLEY College will help create three new colleges in Saudi Arabia after securing a lucrative multi-million pound contract with the Middle Eastern kingdom.

It has won a three-year deal to mentor Saudi staff, creating three colleges in the country.

Teams of between 10 and 15 staff from the college will be based in Saudi Arabia at the new institutions over the initial three year period. Staff will work alongside Saudi teachers in improving the performance of the new colleges, including best practice on teaching and the curriculum, English language skills and leadership training.

Dudley College principal Lowell Williams said: "The college has been successful in being awarded three capacity and capability building contracts in Saudi Arabia, two male colleges and one female, where our staff will work alongside the Saudi college staff to improve their capacity.

"The total value of these contracts is £18 million over three years. Income from these projects will support the ongoing capital development of the college in Dudley.

Opportunity

"We see this as an exciting opportunity for both Dudley and education in Saudi Arabia, as this supports the country's vocational training reforms."

The news comes alongside growing concern about Saudi Arabia's record on human rights after it emerged Karl Andree, a 74-year-old UK citizen, has been sentenced in the country to 350 lashes for possession of alcohol.

Earlier this month Prime Minister David Cameron scrapped a £6m deal for the British Ministry of Justice to train Saudi Arabian prison staff amid criticism of the kingdom's human rights record. According to Amnesty International, Saudi Arabia executed 102 people in the first six months of this year.

Mr Williams added that while aware of those issues, the college could not comment on individual cases. He said: "In agreeing to take assignments in Saudi Arabia, Dudley College Worldwide consulted closely with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and UK Trade and Investment."

Centre opens doors for learners



Head of Stourbridge College Wendy Stevens in the new IT Suite

A £615,000 independent living centre has opened its doors to students at Stourbridge College.

It has been built to support students with a disability or special educational needs.

Based at the college's art and design centre in Brierley Hill, it includes a living unit with kitchen, dining and bedroom areas.

Bosses say this will enable students to gain a range of skills in-

cluding budgeting, planning menus for a healthy lifestyle and carrying out home maintenance.

The new centre was opened by Dudley Council's chief executive Sarah Norman.

Confidence

She said: "We are delighted to support this unit, which we know will encourage learners to develop greater confidence in themselves

and their abilities. The learners deserve to be in the best possible environment for success and they are sure to thrive in these exceptional surroundings."

Wendy Stevens, head of Stourbridge College, said: "The centre provides a safe environment for our students to develop their skills, while allowing them to work alongside fellow learners in an atmosphere of tolerance and trust."

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Academies paying for patrols 'will save money'

ACADEMY schools have enough money to pay for their own lollipop men and women, Dudley Council's finance boss said after the proposal was put forward as part of multi-million cuts.

The cash-strapped council no longer wants to foot the bill for school crossing patrols at academy schools, which it has no influence over.

Academies are independent of council control and receive funding directly from the Department of Education.

Council bosses say savings must be found to stop the Labour-run authority from going bankrupt, blaming the Government for reducing its grant.

Finance member Councillor David Sparks said making academies pay for their own school crossing patrols was another area where cash could be saved. The changes are due to come into force from next April.

But he suggested academies would not be forced into the move. "This is not us saying 'we don't agree with academies so we are going to charge them for crossing patrols,'" he said.

"They get an amount of money to fund things like crossing patrols."

Dudley councillor Ken Finch believes paying for lollipop ladies would not be much of a stretch for most academy schools.

The Labour councillor said: "Academy schools, as someone who was on a seat of governors for many years, have got finances. They will probably be able to afford it."

"As long as we have got traffic patrols, that is the main thing. We have got to consider the safety of pupils."

Task group set up for refugees

A TASK group has been launched in Dudley ahead of the borough welcoming 20 refugee families fleeing Syria.

The group will be led by the Dudley Council for Voluntary Service. It will co-ordinate voluntary sector provision for the new arrivals.

Spokesman Terry Gee said there were no dates for arrivals but work had started in setting up the group.

Dudley Council has offered to welcome the families under the current humanitarian settlement programme.

It will offer housing, health, education and other support to families.

Help provided will be funded nationally but council bosses said the borough has a duty to do what it can to help some of the thousands of refugees fleeing Syria.

20mph speed limit proposed at school

A 20mph speed limit may be introduced outside a Dudley primary school. Dudley Council wants to improve safety outside Kates Hill Community Primary School. A final decision will be made on November 5.

Eyesore block fetches £800k at auction



Cavendish House – £800,000 sale

AN eyesore office block which has blighted the Dudley skyline for years has been sold for £800,000 after going under the hammer at auction.

Dudley Council has said talks are already under way with the new owners of dilapidated Cavendish House. Officials said proposals were now expected to take a 'huge step forward'.

The identity of the buyer has not been confirmed with officials from London auctioneers Allsop, which carried out the sale, saying only that the building had been bought by a 'local property company'. They confirmed

the complex had fetched £800,000 when it went under the hammer. This was less than the guide price of between £1.2 and £1.5m.

Previous owners Abstract decided to put the office block up for sale as Dudley Council favoured the £50 million Porters Field project submitted by developer Avenbury.

Bosses from the company said they wanted to concentrate on projects other than in Dudley.

Former owners Abstract said they were pleased the building had been sold and believed the complex would

still play an important role in the regeneration of that part of the town.

Director Chris McPherson: "Cavendish House is a key piece in the jigsaw for proposals submitted for that part of the town centre."

If successful, the Porters Field project would see restaurants, shops and houses built alongside a supermarket.

Under that scheme, Cavendish House would be demolished to allow for a modern store and a stylish public piazza. Officials say the project would bring in an estimated 500 jobs. Avenbury was unavailable for comment.

Reduced library hours as museum faces axe

OPENING hours will be reduced at libraries across the Dudley borough under new proposals for the future running of the service.

Many libraries will also become single staffed under proposals put forward by Dudley Council bosses.

Cuts would also be made to opening hours at the borough's archives centre in Dudley.

Councillors have been advised to approve a plan to establish a Libraries, Archives and Learning Mutual, which would involve the services being run by council employees, independent of the authority itself. Councillors and volunteers will also be invited to get on board.

If given the nod, the changes would begin to come into force from next April, with single staffing to be introduced to all libraries during mornings apart from main libraries in Dudley, Brierley Hill, Stourbridge and Halesowen.

From April 2017 library opening hours would be reduced. Dudley's archives centre, which opened in 2013 at a cost of £6m, would also have its weekly opening hours slashed from 41-and-a-half to 30-and-a-half.

Committed

Councillor Rachel Harris, cabinet member responsible for libraries and archives said: "We are committed to delivering high quality services to our existing customers and at the same time providing opportunities to widen access to community services."

Conservative opposition leader Councillor Patrick Harley said: "It shouldn't be the decision of the council to reduce opening hours. The council should set up the new delivery model and then hand it over and let them decide how to run it."

The news follows the announcement that Dudley Museum and Art Gallery is to close, up to 275 council jobs are to go and council tax to rise in a bid to save £20m over three years. Public toilets, dog bins and gritting lorries could also be in the firing line.

Finance boss Councillor David Sparks said the council had to take tough decisions. The museum closure, as well as cutting opening hours at the Red House Glass Cone in Wordsley, could save more than £750,000 by 2018/19.

But Keith Turley, chairman of the Dudley Society of Artists, said: "I am horrified."

Steve Briscoe, who is behind plans to establish a new Dudley Civic Society described the cuts as a 'kick in the teeth'.



Marion Griffiths, who is marking 25 years as a volunteer, at the annual pink day at the White House Breast Cancer Care group, Dudley

Surprise party has Marion in pink

WHEN breast cancer survivor Marion Griffiths was given the all clear, she decided to do something for other women who were going through the same experience.

Now 25 years on, she has been recognised for her efforts helping people through their ordeal.

The ladies at the Breast Cancer Care group who meet each month at the White House Cancer Support centre in Ednam Road, Dudley, showed their appreciation for Marion by throwing her a surprise party.

Her achievement coincided with the group's annual pink day, which is held every October to raise awareness of breast cancer.

The group, made up of around 30 women, has played an important part in helping people get through breast cancer, offering support and encouragement. All the members are able to share their own experiences.

Marion, aged 68, said: "It's an absolutely fabulous group. We talk and offer help and encouragement. We have all come out the other side so it gives them help and encouragement."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Homes pledge to bring more cash

CASH-STRAPPED Dudley Council has said it will aim to ensure 1,000 homes are built every year across the borough until 2019 to bring in much-needed money through council tax payments.

They have targeted council tax as a way of bringing in more cash and will seek to push through developments over the next three years.

Finance boss Councillor David Sparks said: "One of the borough's huge strengths is the fact that it is a desirable and attractive place where people want to live."

Flats plan at pub site are backed

A DERELICT pub in Coseley will be turned into flats after proposals were approved by council planners.

The Hop and Barleycorn, in Mason Street, is to be converted into five apartments after plans submitted by Dudley Estates were given the green light by Dudley Council on the condition the developer submits a car parking layout plan, an amended site layout and details of three external electric vehicle charging points.

The proposals were re-submitted after an earlier application was withdrawn in August.

Memorial work now under way

WORK to install a restored war memorial at its new location in Woodseton is under way.

The monument, which stood outside Mount Tabor Church for many years, will be sited further along Sedgley Road West.

New engraving has been etched onto the memorial and workers have begun putting the memorial in place. Councillor Keiran Casey said: "We wanted to have it in place in time for Remembrance services this year."

Ex-welder Sean to dish out a barrel of laughs

A BLACK Country comedian will headline Can Comedy's next Barrel of Laughs night in Lye.

Former Dudley welder Sean Percival, who also writes comedy scripts, will perform his stand-up act at Sadlers Brewhouse and Bar on the Conyers Trading Estate, Station Drive on November 25 from 8pm.

Also appearing will be Michael Crump, who starred in Lenny Henry's recent comedy drama Danny and the Human Zoo.

Chef curries favour

A CHEF from Halesowen has been voted one of the best curry cooks in the UK. Kayum Ali, executive chef at Spice Fusion in Long Lane, was one of 40 cooks to receive official recognition for their contribution to the curry industry at the Curry Chef of the Year Awards.

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THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



GREAT inventions of our time. A reader reports a BBC local news webpage informing us that a cyclist involved in a crash was wearing "see-through cycling glasses." They are definitely the best sort.

BEHOLD, a bright new golden age dawns between Britain and China. China's President Xi and his wife get three nights in Buckingham Palace, a ride in a golden carriage and a meeting with William and Kate. Chinese tourists get cheaper travel visas to visit Britain. We Brits get a new nuclear power station which won't be finished until 2025 and will then produce electricity twice as expensive as it is now. You may call this a great leap forward but it looks to me like China's revenge for the Opium Wars.

INTERESTINGLY, it is estimated that the new power station at Hinkley Point will produce enough electricity to supply six million homes. It is undiplomatic to ask how much of this electricity will be consumed by Chinese tourists?

TECHNICAL terms of our age. BT says the engineers fixing my landline (yet again) may be delayed because our home is in a 'high work-stack area'.

LAST Wednesday was the exact date that Marty McFly and the Doc travelled to in the movie Back to the Future II. Cue nostalgic smiles from TV and radio presenters, a rash of celebration parties and the overuse of words such as iconic and ground-breaking. All today's hype ("The World Celebrates" - Guardian, etc) is based on the assumption that everybody not only loves the Back to the Future trilogy but remembers them word-perfectly. Include me out. They may be moderately entertaining and have a certain cultish appeal but they're not exactly Star Wars, are they?



DAME Eileen Atkins objects to men taking women's roles on the grounds that actresses already face 'an infinitely tougher time than men' on the stage. Sadly, she's up against progress. These days, regardless of race, age or gender, anyone can play anything. As Monty Python's Life of Brian reminded us, it is every man's right to be a woman.

BILL Bryson declares in his new book, The Road to Little Dribbling, that Britain was at its best in the early 1970s, having achieved 'a kind of perfection'. Really? I must have missed it. In 1971 I found shirts at Preston market for a bargain £3, while a new tyre for the car was £6. The catch? I was earning less than £12 a week. In today's global, cheap-as-chips world you cannot begin to explain how much it cost simply to feed and dress ourselves in the 1970s.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Four-year term for firearms theft

A BURGLAR who stole four firearms now feared to be in the hands of drug dealers has been locked up for four years.

Daniel Kowolik grabbed the haul of three shotguns and a rifle from the locked cabinet of their owner who had a licence to keep them.

The 25-year-old regular drug user struck at the address in Vicarage Road, Stourbridge after befriending

the 'vulnerable' son of the family - and even bragged about the haul on the instant messaging service WhatsApp during the break-in, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

Mr Jonathan Cox, prosecuting, said: "He was looking to offload these lethal weapons to friends and acquaintances. They could well have ended up in the hands of those with links to the supply of controlled

drugs." The firearms, worth a total of £2,000, were stolen along with a laptop and a safe while the owner and his wife were out on March 12.

Kowolik was suggested as a suspect by their son who had previously had his credit card stolen and used to withdraw money by the defendant. He was arrested later the same day, but no longer had the guns and would not help police to trace their

whereabouts. Mr Simon Hanns, defending, admitted Kowolik knew the son of the family and had stolen from him in the past but he said there was no evidence that he sold the firearms or received any personal gain.

Kowolik from Church Hill, Brierley Hill who had 10 previous convictions involving 24 offences, admitted burglary and illegal possession of firearms.

Museum's entrance is designed for pupils

A NEW £150,000 entrance for school pupils arriving at the Black Country Living Museum has been opened.

Museum bosses said the entrance would also further improve links with Dudley Zoo and Dudley canal tunnels.

Guests attended the launch of the new entrance which is accessible off a new link road created off Tipton Road near Dudley Archives. It encompasses a single-storey brick building that has an inside function room, covered outdoor area and toilet block.

Cast iron window frames and gas lamps are also in keeping with the museum.

The build, that has been two years in the making, was funded by the European Regional Development Fund and also The Connie and Albert Taylor Trust.

Head of learning at the museum, Mel Weatherley, said: "This part of the museum was completely overgrown before and school trips were being organised on the car park. But now we have this entrance it will make it a lot easier for a range of activities to take place. Inside we have a projector and a screen that will allow us to engage with groups better.

"Outside it will be interesting for people to arrive in a different area too, with an entirely different view of the museum from what they would usually see.

"It has given us a lot more space and our adult groups can make use of it too - it's kind of like an industrial workshop."

Police to continue car park patrols

POLICE say they will continue to patrol a vandalism-plagued Stourbridge car park, which is being closed at night.

The Ryemarket car park in Stourbridge was previously open 24/7 but it will now close at 8.30pm Monday to Saturday and at 5pm Sundays. Council bosses said they had been left with no option following numerous complaints about youths hanging around into the early hours.

Sergeant Andy Holder confirmed patrols would continue during opening hours and said Wollaston and Stourbridge Town police team was trying to get Public Space Protection Orders to curb anti-social behaviour at the car park. He added: "We have engaged with local schools around graffiti."

Family of chinchillas are donated to zoo

THREE chinchillas have been donated to Dudley Zoo after their owner developed an allergy to them.

Meeko, Tink and their daughter Lady have been handed over to the presentation team in the Discovery Centre at the Castle Hill attraction.

Trust go from shed to impressive canal centre

by Claire Butler

A £3.4 million visitor centre run by Dudley Canal and Tunnel Trust has opened its doors to the public.

Featuring a restaurant, gift shop and learning space for schools, The Portal will also be available for wedding receptions and community events.

The modern building is situated next to the entrance to Dudley's network of canal tunnels and limestone caverns.

"It is an incredibly exciting time for us," said the trust's chief executive, Nick Morris. "I think when you look at what we have left behind in our old premises of the green shed, it has really transformed the outlook for everyone.

"Now we have a great education area which allows us to properly work alongside schools for the whole day. Our rooms can also be used for activities such as senior days and wedding facilities too," he explained.

Funding

The £3.4 million centre comes following funding supported by the European Regional Development Fund, Heritage Lottery Fund, Biffa Award and Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership. It has created 15 jobs.

Mr Morris said: "The shed used to leak was covered with a tarpaulin most of the time, with no heating and no running water, so it could be quite difficult.

"We used to come into work of a morning and go straight to the tap and fill up a water bottle just to make a cup of tea. Now we have staff showers and central heating. It's great."

The Portal also features an interactive exhibition in the Biffa Award Gallery, and a restaurant called Gongoozlers, offering posh Black Country nosh. It can seat up to 85 people.

After opening its doors on October 19, it has already received positive feedback. Mr Morris added: "Everyone who has visited so far is really impressed."



Open for business — Dudley Canal and Tunnel Trust's new headquarters, off Birmingham New Road



The restaurant at The Portal, selling posh nosh



Canal view — Mr Morris on the balcony at The Portal

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Free parking offer at shopping centre

SHOPPERS will be able to park for free for two hours at a shopping centre in Brierley Hill.

The Moor Centre, which was bought by Evolve Estates earlier this year, is running the offer from now until the new year after listening to customers and traders.

The two hours of free parking will be available seven days a week during the run up to Christmas.

The Moor Centre has 22 retail units and includes High Street names including Iceland, Boots, Card Factory, 99p Stores, and Greggs.

Meeting over bid for supermarket

CAMPAIGNERS fighting plans to build a convenience store next to a popular Cradley Heath pub will hold a meeting on November 10.

It has been organised by the Friends of Haden Cross ahead of a site visit from councillors the following week.

New River Retail wants to demolish a garage by the Haden Cross Inn, in Halesowen Road, and build a supermarket with parking.

Pub supporters have a petition with more than 500 signatures backing the inn, which has been granted Asset of Community Value status.

Couples keen to marry in chapels

FORTY couples have already enquired about holding a ceremony at the revamped Lye and Wollescote Chapels, months before the refurbished Victorian buildings open again.

A £1 million project to revamp the chapels is nearing completion and a new register office will open at the site on Cemetery Road, Lye, in the spring.

Dudley Council said the site for the services will be renamed the Thomas Robinson Building, after its original architect.

2,000 poppies in art project on display

COMMUNITY groups and adult learning students from across Dudley have created an art installation to mark Armistice Day.

More than 2,000 poppies will go on display at the council house and will be on show until after the Armistice Day commemorations.

Mayor of Dudley, Councillor Steve Waltho, said: "We continue to ensure we don't forget the involvement of our service men and women in both past and current conflicts."

Youths gathering

YOBS have been throwing litter and disturbing residents and shoppers in Lye.

Police are liaising with councillors over the issue after residents reported their concerns on High Street.

Groups have been gathering in the evenings around Christ Church.

High-speed broadband roll out's milestone

MORE than 2,000 businesses and homes across the Black Country are now able to access high-speed fibre broadband for the first time.

It is the latest milestone of the Black Country Broadband Project, with engineers having installed more than 20 road-side cabinets, which enable people to connect to the new network.

The £12.2 million project is a partnership between the Black Country LEP, BT and the Government's Broadband Delivery UK programme, supported by the local authorities in Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton.

Ninder Johal, chairman of the group and LEP Board member, said: "Reaching the 2000 milestone is an important step in delivering our ambition of a minimum 98 per cent high-speed fibre broadband availability by the end of June 2017. High-speed fibre broadband will bring a terrific boost to the local economy."

High-speed fibre broadband is already available in around 92 per cent of the area, more than 468,000 homes and businesses.

Parts of Walsall, Wednesbury and West Bromwich were among the first areas to benefit from the roll-out, including Blackheath, Langley, Rowley, Bristall, St Paul's, Tividale and parts of Oldbury. Work will begin later this year on the second phase, which will extend to areas of Brierley Hill, Dudley and Tipton.

For more information visit the www.blackcountrylep.co.uk website.

Pair in court after officer hit by car

A MAN has appeared in court after a policeman was hit by a car in Dudley.

Mohammed Asim, 25, of Queen's Cross, Dudley, pleaded not guilty to dangerous driving, using a car without insurance and driving a vehicle otherwise than in accordance with a licence.

Asim appeared at Dudley Magistrates Court last week alongside Naila Yasmen, 33, of Highfields Road, Saltley, also charged in connection with the incident in Wolverhampton Street at 3.30pm on August 6 in which a police sergeant was struck.

Asim and Yasmen will both appear at Wolverhampton Crown Court on January 21. Asim was granted conditional bail, on the basis he does not contact Yasmen.

Lamp's spotlight on comedy night

A DUDLEY town pub hosts a night of stand-up comedy on Sunday.

Up-and-coming comics from across the Midlands perform at the Lamp Tavern, High Street, at 8.30pm. Entry is £2.

Shop that sold child booze keeps licence

THE owners of a Dudley shop where a 15-year-old girl was sold alcohol have been allowed to keep their licence but conditions have been set regarding training and serving procedures.

Bill's General Store on Wellington Road, Dudley, sold a bottle of WKD to the youngster, which contained four per cent alcohol.

She was part of a trading standards test purchase operation to see if she would be served by staff.

Licensee Baljais Singh was not working in the shop when the incident happened. His wife, Sukhjinder Kaur, was on the phone at the time of serving the 15-year-old and did not ask for ID, Dudley Council's licensing committee meeting heard.

At a meeting last week, Councillor Chris Elcock

questioned Mrs Kaur, asking if 'she knew the seriousness of the offence'. She replied: "I am very sorry for what happened, I didn't look properly at the girl, it was a mistake and won't happen again."

Conditions

Trading standards have requested Mrs Kaur needs to be fully licence-trained, as one of the conditions for her to be working in the store.

At the time of the incident she had only been working in the store 'a matter of weeks' and since the previous meeting in September she has attended a personal licence holder training course and is waiting for the confirmation papers to come through.

Councillor Donella Russell also requested a re-

fusal register of all people who were declined alcohol 'needed to be next to the till at all times' and advised a till prompt should be fitted to make sure every customer is checked for the 'over 25' policy.

She said: "I have a 15-year-old son and if someone had served him alcohol in this way, I would be absolutely mortified."

"We will have monthly check-ups of the store, which will make sure these conditions are continuing to be met."

Mr Singh, has managed the store since April and said it was his first time running a business. Both he and his wife, who are the only workers at Bill's General Store, told the meeting 'something like this would not happen again'.

300 Merry Hill jobs for the festive season

MORE than 300 Christmas jobs are up for grabs at Merry Hill shopping centre.

Next, Primark and Argos are among the well known names recruiting staff for the busy festive season.

Currys PC World and jewellers H Samuel and T H Baker are also looking for staff over Christmas.

Merry Hill itself is also advertising for 12 new staff, five of which are permanent, for a range of roles at the centre in Brierley Hill - including Father Christmas at the centre's festive grotto. It marks the start of the busy Christmas countdown at the centre which attracts thousands of shoppers.

Shop managers and centre bosses Intu are recruiting for positions via the internet this year in a bid to fill vacancies over the coming weeks.

Fashion giant Next is looking to take on 73 members of staff for the festive season. Bosses have revealed Primark has been recruiting 25 people for temporary positions at its shop. Applications have now closed for these roles.

Recruiting

TH Baker is seeking eight temporary sales assistants at its shop and people have until tomorrow (Friday) to apply. Card and gifts retailer Paperchase is also among those recruiting. Intu are recruiting for roles including cleaners and toilet attendants.

Merry Hill marketing manager Rob Pickersgill said it is important to have staff to fill vital roles during the festive season.

"Christmas is our busiest time and we recruit extra staff to ensure we continue to deliver a seamless customer service and high standards that shoppers expect from one of the country's leading centres," he said.

President of the Black Country Chamber of Commerce Ninder Johal added: "In line with the economic prosperity that we have in the UK and the Black Country, which is the second highest performing Local Enterprise Partnership area, this is another example of retail, which was previously another struggling sector, picking up."

"One of the problems future employers experience with new graduates, students and young people is that they don't have the requisite work experience. But this is a great way for people to address that."

Visit www.intu.co.uk/merryhill/jobs

Climbers hit heights for charity



The Dudley climbers reach Bert's Peace Cairn on top of Ben Nevis, raising more than £1,500

FUNDRAISERS scaled the heights to collect £9,000 from annual climb of Ben Nevis.

A group of walkers including Dudley North MP Ian Austin took on the trek in August in memory of peace campaigner Bert Bissell and to help the Mayor's charities.

Mr Bissell, a Christian peace campaigner died aged 96 in 1998.

A probation officer, who lived in Selborne Road, Dudley, he founded the Young Men's Bible Class

at Vicar Street. He first climbed Ben Nevis on VJ Day in 1945 and many times afterwards, constructing a Peace Cairn at its summit. There is a monument to Bert at Coronation Gardens opposite the council house.

The team also comprised Mr Bissell's lifelong friend Astley Blake who now runs the bible class he established, Dudley mayor Steve Waltho and his wife Jayne, deputy mayor Mohammed

Hanif, councillors Dave Tyler and Keiran Casey, businessmen Damian Corfield and Shaz Saleem, and fundraisers Sarah Alliband and Stephen Rayner.

Funds raised will be split between the Hope Centre in Halesowen, The What Centre in Stourbridge, More Mascots Please in Brierley Hill, the Georgina Unit at Russells Hall Hospital and the West Midlands branch of Lupus UK, based in Coseley.

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Cloudy2Clear Windows – Service With A Smile!

It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services.

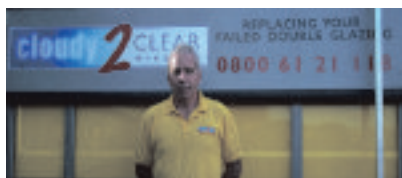
Managing Director Brian Stanley feels that it's all about service. "Our product is simple. If your double glazing is misted up we can replace the glass at a fraction of the cost of a new window, in any type of frame, and with a new 5 year guarantee. But it's not just about saving people

money, although that obviously helps. Many tradespeople have struggled since last year and I honestly feel that during the good times a minority perhaps didn't focus on customer care as much as they should have done.

We make sure we turn up when we say we will, do the job the customer requires and leave their house as clean as a whistle. I often get comments back from customers on how they really didn't expect that sort of service which, in a way, is very sad for the service industry as a whole."

Cloudy2Clear service Wolverhampton and the surrounding

area and Brian is finding that his approach is a major factor in his success. "The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people



I've done work for, which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated."

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IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews



Leaders force the issue on diversity

WHAT would you say is your biggest concern about policing at the moment?

The fact they are closing down police stations in half of the Black Country? Or maybe the police chief who said we should not automatically expect the boys in blue to come running when we have been affected by something so trivial as a burglary.

Then there is the proliferation of speed cameras financed by the booming industry of "speed awareness courses", where motorists pay £90 to spend the day being patronised by tedious public-sector types to avoid getting points on their licence.

However, it appears that Home Secretary Theresa May believes there is a more pressing issue. A lack of diversity in the ranks. I must admit, I was a bit worried about that, too. All those sleepless nights agonising about diversity targets, they take their toll you know.

Mrs May says not one of the 43 forces in England and Wales looks anything like the community they serve. Now, of course, it should be a most basic requirement that the police treat everybody equally, regardless of race or religion, both when dealing with the public and in recruitment. But that should be the beginning and the end of the matter.

Surely, rigging the recruitment process to make forces a perfect cross-section of society is taking a sledgehammer to crack a nut. If we were really serious about having a police force that represents the society we live in, there would need to be far more targets. For example, the Health and Social Care Information Centre says 66.6 per cent of the UK population are overweight. So our officers had better make it burgers and chips in the canteen, then.

Also, around one in every 1,000 people has a burglary conviction. Does that mean we need a few token house-breakers? And what about the 500,000 people in England over the age of 90? Old folk should be represented too.

An alternative approach is that we could just forget all about diversity, and choose the best people for the job, regardless of their background. Controversial, I know, but it might catch on.

■ ■ ■
ANOTHER little ray of sunshine comes from those fun-loving funksters at the National Institute for Clinical Excellence. They say there is now no safe level of alcohol for middle-aged people, and even modest consumption of beer or wine for people aged 40 to 65 can increase the risk of dementia and result in an eventual memory loss.

Meanwhile, the National Institute for Clinical Excellence says there is no safe level of alcohol consumption for middle-aged people. Even modest consumption of beer or wine can lead to dementia and memory loss. I think.



Bill in his Suffolk Regiment uniform



With his Army compatriots, Bill, seen far right, was a survivor of the Japanese prisoner of war camps



Bill seen in later life as a war veteran

Hero Bill who lived a long and happy life

LEE WATTON tells the remarkable story of former Japanese prisoner of war Bill Wheale who has died aged 97

THE horrific scenes he witnessed would haunt anyone for the rest of their life – but former prisoner of war William Wheale did not let these experiences define him.

And tributes are now being paid to the great-grandfather from Tipton, who has died aged 97.

Better known as Bill, his family has paid tribute to a man with a terrific sense of humour and whose greatest pride was that all of his five grandchildren attended university.

During the Second World War, Bill's unit, the 4th Battalion of the Suffolk Regiment, was taken captive when the Japanese conquered Singapore in February 1942.

He was marched inland to work on the infamous Burma Railway, a military supply route for the expanding Japanese empire.

Fortnight

And when cholera hit the prison camp where he was held, Bill was put to work burying the dead. In a single fortnight his squad were burying 40 corpses a day – and would not be fed until the grim task was completed.

Bill's son Roger, 69, said while the experiences had understandably stayed with his father for the rest of his life he had not let them define who he was.

And unlike many, he was able to tell his family some of the details of what he had witnessed and experienced during his time as a prisoner of war – although some of the worst experiences were pushed to the back of his mind.

Roger said: "He had the occasional nightmare but was able to move on. He used to share some of the things he had experienced."

"He used to talk about how the jungle was velvet black at night and the sounds of the animals were so loud it was like machinery. Then



Bill Wheale's widow Ivy and son Roger with a picture of him during the Second World War

a tiger would make a noise and all of the other animals would fall silent for a time." Roger said his father had also talked about the lack of food given to the prisoners and the methods they used to try and get more sustenance.

"He always used to say dried yak was too chewy to describe and on one occasion him and three others had captured a vulture to try to eat. They boiled it in an oil drum for three days and it was still not edible. They decided to try and use it as bait but nothing else wanted it either." Bill also spoke of his first meal after being freed in 1945. He used to say: "I ate 27 rounds of bread and butter and five courses of every meal."

Roger said he had never really known his father to worry about anything. "During his time as a prisoner of war he had seen everything – beatings, decapitations – the true harshness of life and death. I don't think any-

thing else, any other situation, was able to hit him in the same way." After enduring the ordeal of cholera, Bill's right leg became so ulcerated that amputation seemed inevitable.

His mates scrounged a handful of toilet-disinfectant crystals. The camp doctor scraped the ulcer away to the bone and covered the cavity with the crystals. When the wound went septic, a handful of maggots was applied to digest the pus. He survived but it was a close-run thing.

Bill's war ended when the crew of a submarine spotted the smoke from a fire and sent someone to investigate. It was August 29, 1945. He returned home by slow boat so did not arrive back in Britain until the end of 1945.

Bill married his wife of nearly 70 years, Ivy, now 98, in 1946 at Netherton Church. The couple had met in Priory Park, Dudley, before



Bill, left, during a wreath-laying ceremony

the war. His best man was friend Norman Sargeant.

He went to work at engineering firm Horseley Bridge and Thomas Piggott working his way up from clerk to transport manager before his retirement in the 1980s.

Bill is survived by Ivy, Roger, other son Adrian, 63, alongside five grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

He died at his home following complications with his heart and his funeral was held on October 15 at Gornal Wood Crematorium. Roger said: "He was very proud of the work Horseley Bridge did and was most proud that all of his grandchildren went to university. He had a sense of humour and was not above laughing at himself."

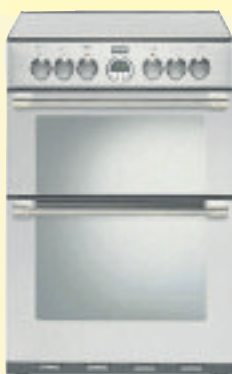
"Whatever situation he was in he never seemed to worry. He had seen it all. He will be deeply missed."

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D-Day heroes back at beaches 70 years on



Arthur Jones, 89, of Pendeford, Albert Gallier, 96, Bridgnorth, Albert Mobbs, 92, Perton, George Waterfield, 91, Lower Gornal, George Griffiths, 90, West Bromwich, Horris Smith, 91, Netherton, and Les Marsh, 91, Halesowen

THEIR heroics will be remembered for generations to come. Now D-Day veterans have been taken back to Normandy for the first time since 1944.

It all became possible through campaigner Joy Widdowson, who saw a piece in The Legion magazine around six months ago, calling upon all Second World War veterans to take part in a 'once in a lifetime' opportunity to return to Normandy.

Ten veterans from Bridgnorth, Gornal and Wolverhampton, along with their relatives, embarked on the five-day trip. The coach went on to pick up another 30 veterans from Bristol before heading to Portsmouth dock to get the ferry.

The group of veterans paid their respects to the fallen at many of the cemeteries, including Ranville and Bayeux. They were also taken to key sites such as Pegasus Bridge, Cafe Gondree, Point Du Hoc, Sword, June, Gold and



Horris Smith, 91, of Netherton, and Les Marsh, 91, of Halesowen

Omaha beaches and Royal Marines Memorial, where they laid a reef.

Veterans like Albert Mobbs said they wanted to stand on the beaches again while they still had the chance. The 92-year-old, of Perton, was part of the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME) and was part of the Tank Brigade 6th Guard, serving from 1941 to 1947.

He said: "The trip exceeded every expectation I had. It brought back

some wonderful memories. We had a lovely trip on the ferry and couldn't thank the company enough, they were amazing. It's a trip I would definitely encourage every veteran to go on."

The trip was run by Arena Travel and part-funded by Libor fines paid by banks that have rigged interest rates.

Mrs Widdowson, of Pendeford, has been involved in the Royal British Legion for 10 years. She said: "I was proud of every single one of those men getting on that coach."

"I first started gathering names around six months ago. I was told if I could get 10 veterans together Arena Travel would pick them up from Wolverhampton, which is exactly what happened."

"I'm happy to have been part of the process in making this happen."

Mark Butcher, 47, from Penn, said his father-in-law, George Waterfield, from Gornal, aged 91, who served on the Royal Corps of Signals, had wanted to return to Normandy for years. He said: "I'm extremely proud of George."

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Heathens hit skids as finale is abandoned

IT could prove to be Cradley Heathens last-ever home meeting – but it had to be abandoned with bosses left apologising to fans.

The plug was pulled after 10 heats of the Knockout Cup Final First Leg against Eastbourne staged at Perry Barr Stadium last Wednesday, with the scores level at 30-30.

Officials said bad weather prior to the event had left the track in less than ideal conditions. Time then simply ran out with speedway events at the stadium not having permission to continue past 10am.

The result stood going into Saturday's second leg, which a depleted Heathens came up short with a 47-43 defeat.

"We would like to apologise for the unsatisfactory manner in which the leg was staged. It was less than ideal for such an important event," said club spokesman Andy Pobey.

Optimistic

"We would like to offer our sincere thanks to all supporters who were patient during track work and the riders for giving it there all in less than ideal circumstances."

Fans had mixed views on the club's future – though many remained optimistic it would continue.

The Heathens were plunged into crisis when chairman Nigel Pearson and club partners Chris Van Straatan and Gary Patchett recently announced they were stepping down.

Fan Paul Rose, 44, of Netherton, said: "I have been a fan ever since I was a child and remember events at Dudley Wood back in the 1990s. I am optimistic new people will come in. Also the club has to move back nearer Wolverhampton as that is more suited to the fan base."



John Hotchkiss and daughter Millie



Crowds at the last home meeting



Brothers Andrew and Martin Johnson



Nigel Taylor, aged 46, from Halesowen

to the fan base." But Nigel Taylor, 46, of Halesowen, said he could not see anyone taking on the club.

"I just can't see it happening which is heartbreaking to be honest," he said.

"When races were held in Wolverhampton I think it was better. Events were packed out. But here in Perry

Barr it is just not the same. I can't put my finger on it but the atmosphere has just not been there."

The Cradley Heathens have been thwarted by an on-going search for a permanent home after losing their home track in Dudley Wood two decades ago.

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Privatisation is to blame for ills

WITH the news that more steel workers are losing their jobs, we should be asking ourselves about the credibility of this Government's ability to create a 'Northern powerhouse'. Perhaps it was a slip of Osborne's tongue, but it seems to me that they are creating instead a 'Northern poor-house'.

The main reason that our steel industry is in decline is that steel manufacture is a highly energy-intensive activity and energy costs in Britain are the highest in Europe.

Think back, wasn't privatisation supposed to reduce energy costs? After all, we all trade in the same market. What the To-

ries who privatised it all forgot to mention was that as nationalised industries they traded as a single huge entity with Government backing, giving them immense bargaining power.

Now, as smaller private organisations they have much less influence. Instead of profits from energy created in the UK going to our exchequer, we are paying wealthy foreign shareholders to increase our living costs and to make our industries uncompetitive. How crazy is that?

M CLIFF
Wall Heath

Dismay at vandalism

SOMEWHERE between Friday, October 16, and Monday, October 19, some mindless idiots smashed up the children's playground at Roberts school, Upper Gornal. The morons who did this not only stopped the children playing in the area but restricted their education.

Probably those who did this cannot read even, if they can, they couldn't care less about the heartache they have caused. One day they may have children or pay tax, then they may realise the problems and cost this has caused. I hope that someone has seen and reports you. I know children who go to the school, and they are most upset.

N D CADDICK
Coseley

No solution to power problems

THE UK is in its worst position for at least the last 10 years with the supply of our electricity. We have a minimal excess of supply over demand of less than two per cent. The industry itself says we need at least 10 times that for comfort and safety.

On BBC television we are informed that 'big' users are being 'asked' to try to use less. A more cynical person than me may call it a 'bribe'. The Government promises to keep the lights on but if we have the severe winter we have been expecting it's unlikely this can be done. People - the old, sick or very young - are at risk. People may die.

What can be done? Well we could try prayer and hope for another mild winter. We are now paying the price for lack of investment in our power producing infrastructure by successive governments of whatever political party. There are no easy solutions.

M GOUGH
Wombourne

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Dudley Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial,
51-53 Queen Street
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

EMAIL

dudleychrons@
expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Town could become just like Disneyland

I ENJOYED reading B Osborne's reminiscences about the Gypsies Tent, but I would disagree with his thought that it should have been acquired by the Black Country Living Museum.

But that apart, other towns and cities also have historic buildings and sites, usually left where they are or in close proximity of the centre. York, Worcester, Stratford and Hereford are good examples. What is there in Dudley? The council obviously thinks the Black Country Living Museum is the town's saviour, according to a recent article.

Headlined: 'Town is at centre of tourist revival', it said: "Civic bosses admit

that the town has the unenviable reputation for its rows of empty shops and that they are pinning their hopes on the museum making the town a top tourist spot."

But developments are taking place at the bottom of the town and Tipton Road. Conveniently for the visitors and tourists, Castle Gate is also down there to meet their needs. Tell me, how is this going to regenerate the town centre?

It will be no more than a form of Disneyland where all whims and needs are catered for within the complex.

J B WALDRON
Stourbridge

Patriotism's worth a shot

I AGREE with Nigel Hasitlow's comment piece - We won't keep the red flag flying. Forcing children to sing the national anthem at school would be an excellent demonstration of precisely how 'liberal, tolerant and open-minded' today's UK is.

But why not go further and also make payment towards the upkeep of the Royal Family optional for each and every tax payer?

That way patriotic parents would have an opportunity to show their loyalty too: by proudly 'opting in' to pay the mere 56p the Palace estimates it currently costs each hard working striver.

S ROBERTS
Halesowen

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Fashions of Mary Quant in spotlight

Wordsley M TG

THE October meeting was opened by Liz Hubbard who welcomed members and visitors. The minutes of the previous meeting were signed, and treasurer Rosemary Skidmore gave a brief resume of the accounts.

The Federation Christmas Carol Service, at St Thomas's Church, Market Street, Stourbridge, is on Saturday, December 12. The next guild lunch club is at the Glassworks, Audnam, on November 2. Himley Country Hotel is booked for the Christmas lunch on Monday, December 7.

The chairman introduced Ruth Lowe who gave a very interesting talk about the rise to fame of Mary Quant. Mary was an evacuee and over time went to 16 different schools. Eventually she studied illustration at Goldsmith's College and opened her first boutique in the King's Road, named Bazaar.

It was in her besit that Mary began making clothes for sale, buying the materials from Harrods. She opened her second boutique in 1961 followed by another in Carnaby Street.

Mary progressed to lingerie, patterned stockings and tights, perfume, make-up, with cosmetics for men as well as ladies, and accessories to compliment her clothes. In 1966 she was awarded the OBE and in 1967 was married to Alexander Plunkett-Green.

During her talk Ruth showed Quant designed clothes and samples of many items of other fashioned accessories. The vote of thanks was given by Liz Hubbard.

Falklands survivor's remarkable story



Josie Hunt, registrar Jan Burrows, Mark Newbold, Ann Rogers and Kath Turner
Dudley South Ladies Luncheon Club

THE October Luncheon was presided over by deputy chairman Ann Rogers at the Himley House Hotel. Best wishes were sent to chairman Mary for her speedy recovery.

Following a three-course lunch members, speaker was Mark Newbold who had served on the Royal Yacht Britannia and survived being torpedoed in the Falklands War.

His job on the Royal Yacht was a diver and had to check several times a day that no bombs were attached. Some 146 sailors manned the yacht but when the Royals were on board a further 50 staff came as well. He travelled the world enjoying a wonderful life. But this came to an abrupt end when the Falklands were invaded 33 years

ago and he was seconded to the missile destroyer The Coventry. It took three weeks to reach the Falklands.

The ship was hit and had to be abandoned. They jumped 80ft in darkness into a flaming sea and had to swim to find a life raft. He was burnt and injured. They witnessed the Coventry sink - 19 died, the rest rescued by helicopter and they returned home on the QEII, 255 servicemen were killed in action but 300 have since committed suicide. His was a remarkable story.

Facing up to demonstration

Grange E TG

GRANGE E Guild held the last meeting on October 6 at Grange Court, Prescott Road, Stourbridge.

Chairman Hazel Smith presided.

Speakers for the evening were staff from Boots demonstrating Clarins products. One lady volunteered to have a facial. Members were very interested in

the various products that were being demonstrated and quite a few items were purchased. Hazel gave the vote of thanks and said how much the demonstration had been enjoyed.

Refreshments were served and the raffle was drawn

with three lucky winners. The sales table consisting of cakes was successful with all cakes being sold. The sales table for November will have a have Christmas theme.

The next meeting will be held on November 3 when the speaker will be Patricia Boyd and her talk will be entitled 'Jubilee'.

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The last round up for a dedicated Wild West fan

HE had a collection of Western memorabilia that spanned the decades and even met some of his heroes from the silver screen.

Tributes have been paid to Wild West enthusiast Michael Whittaker from Brierley Hill who has died at the age of 76.

His brother Tony Whittaker said: "He was an absolute character and one of a kind. The community will be at a loss without him."

Michael was a huge fan of old cowboy movies and his huge collection even included a signed book by a genuine Wild West legend, showman Buffalo Bill.

Michael also had a picture of himself with American actor Clayton Moore, the American former circus acrobat who played The Lone Ranger on TV and starred in dozens of Western movies in the 1930s, 40s and 50s.

His entire haul of memorabilia includes dozens of Native American figurines, cushions, tins, portraits, replica rifles and boxes of Western movie videos.

Shane

One of his most prized items was a gun believed to have been the same one used by movie star Alan Ladd in the classic 1954 Oscar winner Shane.

Tony, aged 71, added: "It was his absolute passion since being a young lad. He built up the collection and we will never part with it."

"I think he had more Indians than Custer at the Battle of Little Bighorn."

Michael, aged 76, died at his home in Mount Pleasant, Brierley Hill, earlier this month.

He was born in Brierley Hill but didn't attend school regularly due to ill health.

His parents, Emily and Roland



Michael's brother Tony and nephew Steven with the enthusiast's collection



Michael Whittaker with The Lone Ranger star Clayton Moore in the 1980s

Whittaker, owned numerous pubs in the area including The Potters Arms, Stores Inn and The Nine Locks and Chain Makers.

Michael began working as a printer at Marsh and Baxter in Brierley Hill, in the 1950s before becoming a lock keeper with British Waterways. He served 25 years with them before retiring in 2004.

Following the death of Michael and Tony's mother in 2002, Michael got to travel to America. Businessman Tony said: "Michael travelled the world with me following the death of mom. We were in the Arizona desert when he saw an Indian chief making a wind chime and decided to buy it off him."

"He was incredibly well known and liked by everyone."



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Housing scheme wins a top award

A FLAGSHIP £5.7 million housing scheme in Lye has been named 'development of the year' at a housing awards ceremony.

Saltbrook Place, developed by Midland heart, was built on the site of a former homeless hostel. It won the award at the annual Midlands Chartered Institute of Housing awards. The project offers support and accommodation with an extensive range of facilities enabling customers to make the transition to a settled home.

Carl Larter, director of assets at Midland Heart, said: "We are thrilled to receive this award recognising the positive impact Saltbrook Place is providing our customers and the wider community."

The supported housing scheme, which received funding from the Homes and Communities Agency, is the result of a partnership between Midland Heart, Dudley Council and contractor United Living.

Borough among poorest, but residents happy, says study

THE Dudley borough is among the least prosperous areas in the UK – but a report says its residents are the happiest in the Black Country.

The borough has not fared as badly as its near neighbours in Wolverhampton and Sandwell in the study by thinktank The Legatum Institute.

Wolverhampton was ranked the least prosperous place to live in the same report – and Sandwell was the second least prosperous. A leading councillor dismissed the report for being

out of touch with life in Dudley borough, which was ranked the 39th least prosperous area in the UK.

Walsall was 29th while Wolverhampton and Sandwell hit numbers one and two on the list respectively.

Salt

The Dudley borough was found to have the happiest residents in the Black Country. Dudley Council's opposition Conservative group leader Councillor Patrick Harley dismissed the findings. He said: "These surveys are probably done

in some office somewhere – to be honest you can take them with a pinch of salt. Dudley people are proud of their heritage and excited about the future."

For its inaugural Geography of Prosperity index, The Legatum Institute compared the prosperity of 170 areas across Britain. It combined the Eurostat's data on gross domestic product for UK local areas and the ONS's well-being statistics.

Dudley ranked 104th for life satisfaction, with a rating of 7.55, and 154th for GDP, with an average salary of £13,795.

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Time will soon be up for old clock tower



The clock at the Moor Centre in Brierley Hill High Street

TIME has been standing still in Brierley Hill – but not for much longer with plans to demolish and replace the faulty town clock tower as part of a £100,000 raft of improvements.

The 40ft landmark has stood outside the Moor Centre since 1998 but due to a fault with the electrical supply it has never worked properly leaving each of the four faces showing a different time.

The owners of the Moor Centre have now revealed they plan to start work dismantling the tower before the end of the year. As well as installing a new four-faced clock, new benches and signs will be installed as part of a revamp of the main square.

Matt Pegg, asset manager of London & Cambridge Properties (LCP), which manages the centre on behalf of owners Evolve Estates, said: "We're delighted to have in place plans to see the old clock tower replaced with a new one."

Shane Birch-Bastock, chairman of Brierley Hill Traders Association, said: "I think it's great news. It's about time something was done and it will be nice to have a working clock in the centre of the town."

In February, The Moor Centre was snapped up by property firm Evolve Estates for an undisclosed sum. The move was welcomed by traders and councillors.

Tradesmen on the regional shortlist

A BUILDER from Brierley Hill and an electrician from Dudley have been shortlisted in an annual search to find Britain's top tradesperson.

Steve Timmins and Marc Deeley have seen off competition from tradesmen and women across the West Midlands and will battle it out in the regional final later this month.

Mr Timmins, aged 54, who trades under the name STBCS, said: "I'm really proud of all of my jobs and work extra time, and travel any distance when needed."

Mr Deeley, aged 44, retrained as an electrician nine years ago and set up the business D and M Electrical Solutions with a partner called Dean Wildblood. He reckons his dedication to training up future electricians will help him to stand out from the crowd.

The regional final of the competition, run by Screwfix, was taking place at the Aston Screwfix store on the Aston Cross Industrial Estate this week.



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Brave choice

Brave New World
at Wolves Grand
Preview – Page 17



He's the daddy

Paddy McGuinness at
New Alex – Page 17



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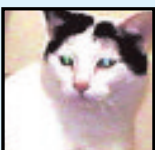
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Ahead of his new BBC3 sitcom, stand-up comic Josh Widdicombe, a regular on Mock the Week and BBC5Live's Fighting Talk, the curly-haired Devonian asks 'What Do I Do Now...?' Visit www.thsh.co.uk

Bobby Long



Tuesday, 7.30pm

Hare and Hounds, Kings Heath

The British singer-songwriter and guitarist, known for evocative lyrics set to haunting melodies, comes to the south Birmingham pub venue in support of his new album Ode To Thinking. www.hareandhoundskingsheath.co.uk

Harry Enfield & Paul Whitehouse



Saturday, 7pm

Civic Hall, Wolverhampton

The Old Gits, Smashie and Nicey, The Scousers, just a few of the characters Enfield and Whitehouse have created over 25 years and now they are taking them on tour. Visit www.wolvescivic.co.uk

James Rhodes



Friday, 8pm

Town Hall, Birmingham

The maverick concert pianist, who had to fight a legal battle to publish his brutally honest memoir Instrumental, will be performing music by Chopin, Bach and Gluck-Sgambati. Visit www.thsh.co.uk

POP & ROCK

Jack Garratt

Tue at 7pm, £10
The Institute, Digbeth, Birmingham, B5 6DY.
Call 0121 643 0428

The Staves

Sun at 7pm, £16
The Institute, Digbeth, Birmingham, B5 6DY.
Call 0121 643 0428

Les McKeown's Bay City Rollers

Sat at 7.30pm, £19.50 - £21
Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, ST16 2LT. Call 01785 254653

Think Floyd: Pink Floyd Tribute

Fri at 8pm, £21
Artrix, Bromsgrove, B61 1PQ.
Call 01527 577330

The Clone Roses: The Stone Roses Tribute

Fri at 6.30pm - 10pm, £11
O2 Academy Birmingham, B1 1DB. Call 0121 622 8250

Kick Up The 80s: 80s Tribute

Fri at 12am, £8 - £9.50
The River Rooms, Stourbridge, DY8 1JN. Call 01384 397177

Snakecharmer

Thu at 8.30pm, £17.50
The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ.
Call 01902 401211

IO Earth

Sun at 7.30pm, £15 - £17.50
The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ.
Call 01902 401211

Leaves Eyes

Thu at 7pm, £13
Wolverhampton Slade Rooms, WV1 1RQ.
Call 0870 320 7000

Mike Zito & The Wheel

Wed at 7.30pm, £13 - £15
The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ.
Call 01902 401211

Motley Crue

Wed at 7.30pm, £45.70
Genting Arena, Birmingham, B40 1NT. Call 0121 780 4141

Will Young: Love Revolution

Wed at 7.30pm, £35 - £45
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA. Call 0121 780 3333

Metz

Fri at 7pm, £10
Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath, Birmingham, B14 7JZ.
Call 0844 870 0000

Classic Clapton: Eric Clapton Tribute

Fri at 7.30pm, £15
Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, ST16 2LT. Call 01785 254653

Killing Joke

Sat at 6pm, £22.50
The Institute, Digbeth, Birmingham, B5 6DY.
Call 0121 643 0428

Hawklords

Tue at 8.30pm, £14
The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ.
Call 01902 401211

My Baby

Wed at 7pm, £10
O2 Academy Birmingham, B1 1DB. Call 0121 622 8250

Buddy Holly And The Cricketers

Sun at 7.30pm, £17.50
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, WV1 1DE.
Call 01902 573320

Dappy

Sat at 6pm, £17.50
O2 Academy Birmingham, B1 1DB.
Call 0121 622 8250

Ginger Wildheart

Fri at 7pm, Sat at 7pm, £20
Wolverhampton Slade Rooms, WV1 1RQ.
Call 0870 320 7000

The Drifters

Sat at 7.30pm, £26
Prince Of Wales Centre, Cannock, WS11 1DE.
Call 01543 578762

Maeftloaf: Meattoaf Tribute

Sat at 12am, £8
The River Rooms, Stourbridge, DY8 1JN.
Call 01384 397177

Raymond Froggatt

Sun at 7.30pm, £17
Artrix, Bromsgrove, B61 1PQ.
Call 01527 577330

Joe Satriani

Mon at 7.30pm - 10.30pm, £34.50 - £38
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA. Call 0121 780 3333

Back:N:Black: AC/DC Tribute

Sat at 7.30pm, £12.50 - £15
The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ.
Call 01902 401211

Go West & Nik Kershaw

Fri at 8pm, £34.50
Birmingham Town Hall, B3 3DQ.
Call 0121 780 3333

Steve Hackett

Fri at 7.30pm, £27.50 - £29.50
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA.
Call 0121 780 3333

FOLK & ACOUSTIC

Claude Bourbon - Medieval & Spanish Blues

Fri at 7.45pm, £10 - £12
Palace Theatre, Redditch, B98 8AE. Call 01527 65203

Luke Jackson

Fri at 8pm, £10 - £12.50
Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, ST16 2LT.
Call 01785 254653

JAZZ & SOUL

EnChante: From Paris To Here

Fri at 7.30pm, £15
The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham, B16 8AE.
Call 0121 643 5858

King Pleasure And The Biscuit Boys

Thu at 10pm, £5
The Jam House, Birmingham, B31QU. Call 0121 200 3030

CLASSICAL & OTHER MUSIC

Vladimir Ashkenazy Conducts Rachmaninov's Symphony No 2

Tue at 7.30pm - 10pm, £9.50 - £50
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA. Call 0121 780 3333

Performance Platform: Timothy Ridout

Tue at 1.05pm - 2pm, £3.50 - £6.50
Birmingham Conservatoire, Birmingham City University, B3 3HG. Call 0121 331 5901

Gospel Goes Charity 2015

Thu at 7.30pm, £15 - £17.50
Birmingham Town Hall, B3 3DQ.
Call 0121 780 3333

Fright Night Classics With The CBSO

Sat at 7.30pm, £14.50 - £39.50
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA. Call 0121 780 3333

THEATRE

Orpheus

Fri at 7.45pm, Sat at 7.45pm, £20
Birmingham Repertory Theatre, B1 2EF. Call 0121 236 4455

Dracula The Kisses

Sat at 8pm - 10.30pm, £12 - £14
Artrix, Bromsgrove, B61 1PQ.
Call 01527 577330

Rummage!: Blah Blah Blah (Ages 5-8)

Sat at 11.30am, 2pm, £9
Birmingham Repertory Theatre, B1 2EF. Call 0121 236 4455

The Snow Dragon (Over 3s)

Fri at 11am, 2pm, Sat at 11am, 2pm, £9
Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, ST16 2LT. Call 01785 254653

In The Motherhood

Tue at 8pm, Wed at 1.30pm, 8pm, £10 - £13
Birmingham Repertory Theatre, B1 2EF. Call 0121 236 4455

Season's Greetings

Tue at 7.30pm, Wed at 7.30pm, Thu at 7.30pm,
Palace Theatre, Redditch, B98 8AE. Call 01527 65203

Shakespeare Schools Festival 2015

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Oliver Samuels In Divorce Papers

Sun at 7.30pm, £25.75 - £30.65
New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, B5 4DS.
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The Haunted Doll's House

Fri at 7.30pm, £13
The Rose Theatre, Kidderminster, DY10 2RX.
Call 01562 743745

Disney On Ice: Worlds Of Enchantment

Fri at 11am, 3pm, Sat at 3pm,
Sun at 12pm, 4pm, £19.74 - £46.62
Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham, B1 2AA. Call 0121 780 4141

Lord Of The Files

Tue at 7pm, Wed at 2pm, 7.30pm,
Thu at 2pm, 7.30pm, £8.50 - £35
Birmingham Repertory Theatre, B1 2EF. Call 0121 236 4455

Barely Methodical Troupe: Bromance

Fri at 7pm, £8 - £12
Birmingham Hippodrome, B5 4TB. Call 0844 338 5000

The Amazing Bubble Man

Fri at 11am, £8.50 - £12
Birmingham Town Hall, B3 3DQ.
Call 0121 780 3333

Brave New World

Tue at 7.30pm, Wed at 2.30pm,
7.30pm, Thu at 7.30pm, £10.50 - £25.50
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, WV1 1DE. Call 01902 573320

Jesus Christ Superstar

Mon at 7.30pm, Tue at 7.30pm,
Wed at 2pm, 7.30pm, Thu at 7.30pm, £20 - £42.50
Birmingham Hippodrome, B5 4TB. Call 0844 338 5000

Annie

Fri at 7.30pm, Sat at 7.30pm, Sun at 2.30pm, £20 - £42.50
Birmingham Hippodrome, B5 4TB. Call 0844 338 5000

Blood Brothers

Fri at 7.30pm, Sat at 2.30pm, 7.30pm, £19.50 - £32.50
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, WV1 1DE. Call 01902 573320

COMEDY

Richard Digance

Fri at 7.30pm, £16.25
Palace Theatre, Redditch, B98 8AE.
Call 01527 65203

Ed Byrne: Outside Looking In

Tue at 8pm, £19 - £21
Artrix, Bromsgrove, B61 1PQ.
Call 01527 577330

Paddy McGuinness: Daddy McGuinness

Fri at 7.30pm, £17.50 - £36
New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, B5 4DS.
Call 0844 871 3011

Milton Jones And The Temple Of Daff

Sat at 8pm, £27.90
New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, B5 4DS.
Call 0844 871 3011

Harry Enfield & Paul Whitehouse: Legends!

Sat at 7pm, Sun at 7.30pm, £32.50 - £41.25
Wolverhampton Civic Hall, WV1 1RQ.
Call 0870 320 7000

Josh Widdicombe

Sun at 8pm, £16.50
Birmingham Town Hall, Birmingham, B3 3DQ.
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TALKS

House Steward: The Pre-Raphaelites: Sex Drugs And Poetry (Over 18s)

Fri at 7pm - 8.45pm, £15
Wightwick Manor and Gardens, Wolverhampton, WV6 8EE.
Call 01902 760100

Steve Backshall's Wild World

Sun at 11.30am - 1pm, 3pm - 4.30pm, £18
Birmingham Town Hall, B3 3DQ.
Call 0121 780 3333

Gino D'Acampo

Tue at 8pm, £24.50
Wolverhampton Civic Hall, WV1 1RQ.
Call 0870 320 7000

CLUBBING

Wolverhampton Soul Night

Sat - Sun at 9pm - 3am,
Wolverhampton Wulfrun Hall, WV1 1RQ.
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Thu at 9.30am - 5.30pm,
The NEC Birmingham, B40 1NT.
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Check out full listings in the ticket in Friday's Express & Star

Brave new take on classic novel

WOLVERHAMPTON Grand Theatre welcomes the world premiere of the new stage adaptation of Aldous Huxley's classic novel, *Brave New World*, from Monday to Saturday.

Featuring the offspring of theatrical royalty, the cast includes Sophie Ward, daughter of Simon, and William Postlethwaite, son of Pete. It is directed by James Dacre, whose father Paul is editor of the Daily Mail. Sophie wed Korean-American writer Rena Brannan in a well-publicised ceremony in 2000, before same-sex civil partnerships were legalised in Britain and is a campaigner for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights. If some say her sexuality defines her, she says: "I don't have a problem with that."

Sophie plays 'the controller', in the original novel a man. Feminist playwright Dawn King says she wanted to increase the gender equality.

As someone not afraid to stand up for what she believes, does Sophie think that's why she was picked to play the part? "Maybe I am known for being outspoken but I have often played quite strong parts on TV and in theatre," says Sophie. "There is a real balance with the character. She's so powerful but because of Dawn's clever writing you see that underneath it's difficult being in charge of things, it comes with its own price. You see her own doubts, her own sacrifices."

Written in 1931, the ground-breaking novel was ranked fifth on the list



Sophie Ward, right, stars in *Brave New World* at Wolverhampton Grand

of the 100 Best English Language Novels of the 20th Century. The story is set in 2540 and depicts a world where humans are genetically engineered. Family and emotional ties do not exist.

Dawn King's script is witty and forthright, based on a novel that is

more than 80 years old. But Sophie says it is still relevant: "Genetic engineering is very much on the front pages. The commercialisation of everyday life, the assisted dying debate and the legalisation of drugs – all these things were at the forefront of the novel."



'Most romantic thing I've ever done'

So now Paddy is the daddy

TV star and comic Paddy McGuinness will bring his Daddy McGuinness show to Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre on tonight (Thu) and tomorrow.

The star of ITV's *Take Me Out* returned to his performing roots in September with his first stand-up comedy tour since 2011.

McGuinness, who has enjoyed numerous sell-out tours and best-selling DVDs, said: "I'm really looking forward to being back on tour – I've missed it."

"I've got a great new show planned, Daddy McGuinness. Amongst many other things, I'll be sharing several stories about becoming a first-time dad and parenthood."

The host of dating show *Take Me Out* says the most romantic moment of his life was proposing to his wife, Christine Martin, on a Christmas Eve.

"That was definitely the most romantic thing I've ever done," he says.

He doesn't normally go in for grand gestures, however. "Well, I think the best thing to do is not put yourself under too much pressure. A lot of blokes will put a lot of pressure on themselves to do something amazing."

"There's no point. If you already have the girlfriend, you are already over the line."

"It's the smaller things that work, like running a bath, cooking a meal or renting a nice film. If you start bursting through the front doors on a white stallion with a rose in your teeth she'll burst herself laughing."

Rock opera and a savage drama

TWO major theatre productions come to Birmingham next week.

Birmingham Hippodrome hosts the new theatre version of *Jesus Christ Superstar*, following the recent stadium-touring revival of Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice's musical tale of the Messiah and Judas. Glenn Carter takes the title role in the rock opera with Tim Rogers as Judas Iscariot and X Factor finalist Rachel Adedeji as Mary Magdalene.

William Golding's disturbing tale of stranded schoolboys going wild on a desert island, *Lord of the Flies*, has been adapted by Nigel Williams and the Regent's Park production explodes onto the stage at Birmingham Rep.

Guitar heroes and a pop idol returns

POP gig of the week has to be the return of singer and actor Will Young, back in the lime-light with his latest single *Joy* and new album *85% Proof*.

In concert at the Symphony Hall on Wednesday, the 36-year-old former *Pop Idol* winner is proof that a solid career can come from talent show TV.

Watch out for folk star Seth Lakeman at the Robin 2 in Bilston tonight (Thu); ex-Genesis guitarist Steve Hackett at Symphony Hall tomorrow; guitar great Joe Satriani at Birmingham Town Hall on Monday. Or spend Halloween at the Robin 2 with BlackNBlack, the Swiss girl band tribute to AC/DC.

Triple bill of dance as Rambert roll in

THREE pieces of dance — one featuring the music of the Rolling Stones — will feature at Birmingham Rep during a four-day visit by acclaimed dance company Rambert, that began last night (Wed).

Rambert will bring the rock 'n' roll swagger of the Rolling Stones to life in *Rooster*, a sharp-suited, snake-hipped celebration of the swinging sixties.

The production will also feature *Frames*, an inventive piece by British dance's hottest property Alexander Whitley, and *Transfigured Night*, a dramatic love story by two-time Olivier-award winning choreographer Kim Brandstrup.

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Express & Star



Recording a short radio play on the BBC headquarters tour at Broadcasting House



The sheer size of Kew Gardens was amazing



Tower Bridge with Tower Hotel nearby



Michael Watson heads up the Jersey Boys cast

Oh, what a night as Jersey Boys sets stage for top weekend away

I'LL be working my way back' to see the phenomenal Jersey Boys again when the musical comes to Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre early next year.

But for now I'll have to content myself with some great memories of my action-packed Parry's International coach break to the capital, which included tickets for the West End show, a visit to Kew Gardens, afternoon tea at a top London hotel and a tour of the BBC's headquarters at Broadcasting House.

Jersey Boys is based around the lives of 60s pop legends Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons. Their songs are the classics we all grew up with, including Sherry, Big Girls Don't Cry, Walk Like a Man, Rag Doll, Let's Hang On, Bye Bye Baby, Working My Way Back to You and many, many others.

By Karen Knowles

We arrived at Piccadilly Theatre in our posh frocks, having just enjoyed afternoon tea at The Waldorf, and settled down to enjoy the show with drinks delivered to our seats through a handy service called Ordertorium. What a great way to beat the queues to the bar. You can either download the free app and place an order on your phone or wave a menu in the air and someone will come and serve you.

Legendary

Michael Watson has the perfect voice and stature to play Frankie and heads a strong cast. No wonder it has drawn stars like The Hoff and even the legendary Valli himself to see the show. It's a belter.

It had been a busy day. First stop was the world-famous Kew Gardens. Being

on a coach was a bonus because we were dropped at the door which was good because it was raining heavily. Kew is a world leader in plant science and conservation and the sheer size of the place was amazing.

It was too wet for the treetop walkway. Instead we toured the vast site on the Kew Explorer land train.

Our accommodation during our two-night stay was at Tower Hotel which overlooks Tower Bridge from where there are great views of The Shard and the Tower of London and only a two-minute stroll from St Katharine Docks where there are dozens of restaurants, pubs and cafes.

If you like your breaks to be stress-free, coach trips are just the ticket. On our journey from Tower Bridge that morning we were caught up in a jam but the driver's local knowledge meant he did a clever detour and still arrived on schedule. Our final

stop was a tour of the BBC. The sun was shining and I really enjoyed the 45-minute journey through the City and into the West End. The seats were comfortable and panoramic windows provided bird's eye views. Being so high up, it was probably the most I have ever seen of London in one go. We saw where the Great Fire of London started, the Millennium Bridge and St Paul's Cathedral.

The BBC tour includes plenty of fun, hands-on stuff, including the chance to read the news and make a short radio play, complete with sound effects. Through floor length windows we watched journalists at work in the state-of-the-art newsroom and visited The One Show studio, taking it in turns to sit on the famous sofa. We even spotted the odd celebrity, including Fiona Bruce filming outside. It was a fascinating behind-the-scenes tour of a much-loved British institution.

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CHOICE



Ian McKellen

The Dresser (BBC2, 9pm)

Drama based on Ronald Harwood's successful play, about the working relationship between an ageing actor and head of a touring Shakespearean theatre company, and his personal assistant. Set against the backdrop of a production of Lear and the Fool during the Blitz, the leading light's work and reputation begin to deteriorate as the situation reaches crisis point. Starring Anthony Hopkins, Emily Watson, Ian McKellen, Sarah Lancashire, Vanessa Kirby, Edward Fox, Tom Brooke, John Ashton, Ian Cunningham, Annalisa Rossi, Helen Bradbury, Carl Sanderson, Matthew Cottle and Martin Chamberlain.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. 10.00 Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30 James Martin: Home Comforts.** 12.00 BBC News; Weather. **12.10 Football Focus.** **12.50 Saturday Sportsday.** 1.00 Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.30 World Gymnastics Championships.** Live coverage of day nine of the competition from SSE Hydro Arena in Glasgow. **4.15 Final Score.** **5.25 BBC News.** **5.35 Regional Programme.** **5.45 Pointless Celebrities.**

6.35 Strictly Come Dancing. Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman present this year's Halloween special, as the 11 remaining couples dress up in spooky attire for another ballroom battle. After another procebrity pair was knocked out last week, judges Len Goodman, Bruno Tonioli, Craig Revel Horwood and Darcey Bussell are the ones to impress, and the dancers must give their best performances in a bid to get their names near the top of the leaderboard. The two lowest scoring couples will perform again in the dance off, and another pair will be leaving on tomorrow night's show.

8.15 Doctor Who. The Zygons have been living in secret on Earth, unknown and unseen – until now. When Osgood is kidnapped by a rogue gang of the shapeshifting aliens, the Doctor, Clara and UNIT must scatter across the world in a bid to set her free. But will they reach her in time, and can they stop an uprising before it's too late?

9.05 Casualty. An unlikely patient arrives in the Emergency Department. Jacob learns that there is no justice. Cal falls in love with his estranged daughter and Connie asks for a report on Alicia.

9.55 The National Lottery Live. The all-important winning numbers are revealed.

10.05 BBC News: Weather.

10.25 Match of the Day. Gary Lineker presents highlights of the latest Premier League matches, including Chelsea v Liverpool at Stamford Bridge and Crystal Palace v Manchester United at Selhurst Park; National Lottery Update.

11.50 The Apprentice. The contestants are instructed to tap into one of the UK's biggest markets. (R)

12.50 Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.55 BBC News.**

BBC2

8.05 Film: The Man in the White Suit. (1951) **9.30 Homes Under the Hammer.** (R) **10.30 Animal Park.** (R) **11.00 Animal SOS.** (R) **11.30 Animal SOS.** (R) **12.00 My Life on a Plate.** (R) **12.45 My Life on a Plate.** (R) **1.30 Terry and Mason's Great Food Trip.** (R) **2.00 Comedians Talking Pictures.** **2.35 Film: Lucky Jim.** (1957) Comedy, starring Ian Carmichael. **4.10 Film: Whisky Galore!** (1949) **5.30 Escape to the Continent.** (R)

6.30 Flog It! Michael Baggot and Will Axon uncover valuable items in Ashbourne, Derbyshire, including a ghoulish object that could put bidders off at auction. Paul Martin visits Chatsworth House where he examines the life of Georgiana, the notorious fifth Duchess of Devonshire. (R)

7.30 Great Continental Railway Journeys. Michael Portillo experiences first-hand Italy's "need for speed" in a state-of-the-art Maserati sports car, and discovers how the leaning tower of Pisa was rescued from near collapse. In Carrara, he finds out how the marble used by Michelangelo is still being quarried and is invited to chip away at a contemporary sculpture. Moving on to Bologna, the former politician embarks on a doomed search for spaghetti bolognese before being taught how to prepare a tagliatelle al ragu. Finally, he lets the wind rush through his hair on a high-speed boat trip across Lake Garda. (R)

8.30 Dad's Army. Mainwaring decides the platoon needs a mascot for a big parade and plumps for a ram, but catching a suitable candidate proves easier said than done. (R)

9.00 Film: The Dresser. Drama based on Ronald Harwood's successful play, about the working relationship between an ageing actor and head of a touring Shakespearean theatre company, and his personal assistant. Set against the backdrop of a production of Lear and the Fool during the Blitz, the leading light's work and reputation begin to deteriorate as the situation reaches crisis point. Starring Anthony Hopkins and Ian McKellen.

10.45 Formula 1: Mexico Grand Prix – Qualifying Highlights.

12.00 Film: Fight Night. (2011) **1.50 Film: Horror Express.** (1972) **3.15 This is BBC Two.**

ITV

6.00 CITY: Bottom Knockers Street. **6.10 Bottom Knockers Street.** (R) **6.25 Bottom Knockers Street.** (R) **6.40 Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures.** (R) **7.05 Signed Stories.** (R) **7.10 Sooty.** (R) **7.25 Super 4.** (R) **7.40 Adventure Time.** **8.00 Marvel Avengers Assemble.** **8.30 Thunderbirds Are Go.** **9.00 Jessie.** **9.25 Murder, She Wrote.** (R) **10.20 The Jeremy Kyle Show USA.** (R) **11.15 ITV News: Weather.** **11.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show.** (R) **12.30 Downtown Abbey.** (R) **1.30 The X Factor.** (R) **3.00 Rugby World Cup.** Coverage of the final (Kick-off 4.00pm).

6.45 Regional Programme: Weather.

6.50 ITV News: Weather.

7.00 The Chase: Celebrity Special. Bradley Walsh presents as Good Morning Britain's Ranvir Singh, journalist John Sergeant, ex-rugby international Ugo Monye and TV presenter Mariella Frostrup put their wits against ruthless quiz genius the Chaser in the hope of winning a potential prize pot worth thousands of pounds. They must work as a team and play strategically to answer general knowledge questions against the clock and race down the game board to the exit without being caught.

8.00 The X Factor. Caroline Flack and Olly Murs present the first of this year's live shows. The 12 remaining acts compete for the chance to make it through to the live final later this year, hoping to impress the judges enough to stay on the show. Simon Cowell has the Overs, Cheryl Fernandez-Versini the Groups, Nick Grimshaw the Boys, and Rita Ora the Girls. However, the standard is high, which is sure to cause drama and disagreements among the judges, and tomorrow's show will see the first act eliminated after a sing-off.

10.25 The Jonathan Ross Show. The hosts welcomes guests Priscilla Presley, Elvis Costello and Rob Beckett for another no-holds-barred bout of questioning, and there is music by Caravan Palace.

11.30 ITV News: Weather.

11.45 Rugby World Cup Highlights. Action from the final, which took place at Twickenham, as the successors to New Zealand were crowned.

12.45 Jackpot247. Interactive gaming. **3.00 Show Me the Telly.** (R) **3.50 ITV Nightscreen.**

CHANNEL 4

6.15 How I Met Your Mother. (R) **6.40 How I Met Your Mother.** (R) **7.05 How I Met Your Mother.** (R) **7.30 Ben Nevis Braveheart Triathlon.** **8.00 The Morning Line.** **9.00 Frasier.** (R) **9.30 Frasier.** (R) **10.00 Frasier.** (R) **10.30 The Big Bang Theory.** **11.00 The Big Bang Theory.** **11.30 The Big Bang Theory.** **12.00 The Simpsons.** (R) **12.30 The Simpsons.** (R) **1.00 The Simpsons.** (R) **1.30 Channel 4 Racing.** Live coverage from Ascot. Wetherby and Down Royal. **3.55 Come Dine with Me.** (R) **4.25 Come Dine with Me.** (R) **5.00 Come Dine with Me.** (R) **5.30 Come Dine with Me.** (R)

6.00 Come Dine with Me. It is the final day in Perth, and Craig's turn to throw a dinner party. He hopes that his land and sea menu will see him score highly, but Daniel and Jenna's quarrel continues. (R)

6.30 Channel 4 News.

7.00 Grand Designs. Kevin McCloud revisits an experimental amphibious house built on a small island on the Thames in Buckinghamshire, to discover how well the unique floating house performs. (R)

8.00 How to Be Queen: 63 Years and Counting. A panel of leading royal watchers assesses how the Queen has retained her place in the nation's affections, after 63 years on the throne, which have made her the longest-serving British monarch in history. The programme explores what she has learned from her family's mistakes, revealing the top 10 secrets of Her Majesty's success and how to survive on the British throne.

9.30 It Was Alright in the 1970s. Matt Lucas narrates another look back at TV shows from past decades, based on the theme of living dangerously in the 1970s. Last in the series.

10.30 TFI Friday. Chris Evans welcomes guests including Cheryl Fernandez-Versini and Duran Duran to his lively entertainment show. Plus, music by Eagles of Death Metal and Foals. (R)

11.35 8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown. Team captains Jon Richardson and Sean Lock are joined by Johnny Vegas and Romesh Ranganathan, while Josie Long is in Dictionary Corner. (R)

12.40 Fargo. (R) **1.50 Alan Carr: Chatty Man.** (R) **2.50 Hollyoaks.** (R) **5.00 River Cottage Bites.** (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **8.55 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.** **9.30 The Saturday Show.** **11.30 The Gadget Show.** (R) **12.30 Ice Road Truckers.** (R) **1.25 Ice Road Truckers.** (R) **2.25 Film: The Ghost of Greville Lodge.** (2000) An orphan staying at his great-uncle's haunted house finds himself caught up in the middle of events from the past. Supernatural family drama, starring Jon Newman and George Cole. **4.10 Funnies Fails.** **4.15 Funnies Fails.** **4.40 Now That's Funny!** **5.40 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away.** (R)

6.30 Film: Superman III. (1983) The Man of Steel battles an evil tycoon, who has recruited a computer genius to aid his schemes for world domination. Together the villains hatch a plan to dispose of Superman once and for all – but instead of killing the superhero, he accidentally unveils his dark side. Comic-book adventure sequel, starring Christopher Reeve, Richard Pryor, Robert Vaughn and Margot Kidder. Edited for language.

8.55 5 News Weekend.

9.00 Football League Tonight. Kelly Cates and George Riley present extended highlights of the weekend's matches, including Birmingham City v Wolverhampton Wanderers at St Andrew's and Sheffield Wednesday v Nottingham Forest at Hillsborough, both of which took place in the Championship. There is also action from Walsall v Gillingham in League One, and Leyton Orient v Accrington Stanley in League Two.

10.25 Film: The Cabin in the Woods. (2012) Five students in a remote house are attacked by supernatural forces, but discover that something far stranger is at work. Horror, starring Kristen Connolly and Chris Hemsworth.

12.15 Film: White Noise. (2005) A man becomes obsessed with the notion that the spirit of his dead wife can contact him via electronic equipment. Supernatural thriller, starring Michael Keaton and Chandra West. **1.55 SuperCasino.** Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team. **4.00 Gift of Life.** Cystic fibrosis sufferer Holly works through a "bucket list" as she waits for a double lung transplant, while three-year-old Ayana awaits an urgent heart transplant. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 Great Movie Mistakes III: Not in 3D
7.15 Top Gear **8.15** Don't Tell the Bride
9.15 Russell Howard's Good News **10.15** Film: Hannibal Rising (2007) **12.10** Family Guy **2.15** Together **2.45** Rent a Cop **3.15** Asian Provocateur **3.45** Great Movie Mistakes III: Not in 3D **4.00** Close

BBC Four
7.00 The Mystery of Rome's X Tomb
8.00 Lost Kingdoms of Central America
9.00 Arne Dahl: Hidden Numbers – Part One **10.00** Arne Dahl: Hidden Numbers – Part Two **11.00** Looking for Mr Bond: 007 at the BBC **12.00** Girl in a Band: Tales from the Rock 'n' Roll Front Line **1.00** Girls in Bands at the BBC **2.00** Top of the Pops: 1980 **2.35** Lost Kingdoms of Central America **3.35** Close

ITV2
2.20 You've Been Framed: Halloween Special **3.25** Film: The Little Vampire (2000) **5.20** Film: Scooby-Doo (2002) **7.10** Film: Scooby-Doo 2: Monsters Unleashed (2004) **9.00** Film: Scary Movie V (2013) **10.45** Celebrity Juice: Halloween Special **11.35** Release the Hounds: Famous and Freaked **12.30** Tricked: Fight Night **1.30** The Almost Impossible Gameshow **2.20** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.45** Teleshopping **5.45** ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3
3.00 Agatha Christie's Marple **5.00** Lewis **7.00** Doc Martin **8.00** Midsomer Murders (2000) **5.20** Film: Scooby-Doo (2002) **7.10** Film: Scooby-Doo 2: Monsters Unleashed (2004) **9.00** Film: Scary Movie V (2013) **10.45** Celebrity Juice: Halloween Special **11.35** Release the Hounds: Famous and Freaked **12.30** Tricked: Fight Night **1.30** The Almost Impossible Gameshow **2.20** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.45** Teleshopping **5.45** ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV4
12.45 Darts: European Championship Live **5.00** Pawn Stars **6.00** Storage Wars: Texas **7.00** Darts: European Championship Live. Day two from Hasselt, Belgium. **11.00** Film: Universal Soldier: Day of Reckoning (2012) **1.15** The Cycle Show **2.20** Highway Patrol **2.45** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping

E4
3.00 How I Met Your Mother **3.30** Film: Aliens in the Attic (2009) **5.15** Rude (ish) Tube Shorts **5.30** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Film: Salt (2010) **11.00** Gogglebox **12.40** The Inbetweeners **1.45** The IT Crowd **2.45** New Girl **3.10** The New Normal **3.30** The Mindy Project **3.55** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **4.20** The Goldbergs **4.45** Film: Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Rodrick Rules (2011) **1.00** Gulliver's Travels (2010) **2.40** Johnny English Reborn (2011) **4.40** Coraline (2009) **7.00** The Addams Family (1991) **9.00** Bram Stoker's Dracula (1992)

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CHOICE



David Attenborough

The Hunt (BBC1, 9pm)
New series. Wildlife series examining the challenges predators face as they stalk their prey, and revealing how it is far more common for hunts to end in failure. The first episode demonstrates how leopards use stealth and concealment to get close to their prey, while African wild dogs have to work as a team. The programme also features footage of killer whales, which rely on their intelligence, Nile crocodiles that can wait years for meals, spiders able to spin 25 foot webs and amur falcons, which travel 16,000 miles every year to hunt insects. Narrated by David Attenborough.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. 7.35 Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** Sunday Morning Live. **11.00** Regional Programme. **12.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News. Weather. **1.15** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **2.15** Eat Well for Less? (R) **3.15** Escape to the Country. (R) **4.00** Points of View. **4.15** Songs of Praise. **4.50** Pointless Celebrities. (R) **5.35** BBC News. **5.50** Regional Programme.

6.00 Countryfile's Ramble for Children In Need. A special extended episode showcasing people around the country who have gone on lengthy country walks to raise money for the charity event. Matt Baker and a severely visually impaired girl climb a mountain in Snowdonia. Ellie Harrison makes a six-mile trek along the Jurassic Coast with a teenager who lost her father to cancer. Adam Henson goes hiking in the peak district with members of the Sheffield Young Carers project. Anita Rani joins hundreds of viewers in Windsor Great Park, and Tom Heap finds out about sponsored rambles across Northern Ireland. Including Weather For The Week Ahead.

7.15 Strictly Come Dancing: The Results. Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman present the results of last night's show. Plus, James Morrison performs his new song Demons and the professionals perform a group routine.

8.00 Antiques Roadshow. Fiona Bruce presents the second of two episodes from Bolsover Castle in Derbyshire. Items brought in to be valued include a painting by DH Lawrence, a broken pot with a connection to the abolition of slavery, a 19th-century pistol, a collection of vintage hats, a complete set of Famous Five books and a rare jade pendant dug up in the garden of a 17th-century house.

9.00 The Hunt. New series. Series following predators as they stalk their prey. The first episode features leopards, crocodiles, killer whales and wild dogs. Narrated by David Attenborough.

10.00 BBC News.

10.20 Regional Programme.

10.30 Formula 1: Mexico Grand Prix – Highlights.

12.00 Citizen Khan. (R) **12.30** Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.35** BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 This Is BBC Two. **6.30** The A to Z of TV Gardening. (R) **7.15** The Big Allotment Challenge. (R) **8.15** Countryfile. (R) **9.15** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **10.45** My Life on a Plate. (R) **11.30** My Life on a Plate. (R) **12.15** MOTD Extra. **1.00** FA Cup: The Road to Wembley. (R) **1.30** World Gymnastics Championships. Live coverage of the tenth and final day from SSE Hydro Arena in Glasgow. **4.45** Rugby League.

7.00 Caribbean with Simon Reeve. Simon visits Barbados and St Vincent, before examining the mismanagement of Venezuela's natural resources and spending time with the Kogi people in Colombia. (R)

8.00 Earth's Wildest Waters: The Big Fish. Ben Fogle takes the five remaining anglers to Costa Rica. They start out fishing close to shore, before setting out into the Pacific, where hundreds of species of fish live.

9.00 Britain's Ultimate Pilots: Inside the RAF. The Red Arrows continue to have bad luck with the weather. The RAF's fastest jet appears in a display over Bournemouth and the pilots receive some shocking news. Last in the series.

10.00 Match of the Day 2. Mark Chapman reviews the day's Premier League action, including Southampton v Bournemouth – the first-ever top-flight meeting between the two south coast clubs.

11.00 Family Guy. Chris gets teased at school for his budget-brand trainers, and tries to steal money from his parents so he can bring his image up to scratch. Meg, however, witnesses his misdeeds.

11.20 Family Guy. Lois is forced to find a job when the family's domestic finances are stretched and is "discovered" by a voiceover talent agent who runs an adult-only phone line.

11.45 Top Coppers. Rust's twin brother Vince escapes from prison, and plots to take his sibling's place at the JCPD. Police drama spoof, starring Steen Raskopoulos and John Kearns. (R)

12.15 NFL Highlights. Kansas City Chiefs v Detroit Lions. **1.15** Film: The Abominable Snowman. (1957) **2.40** Sign Zone: Countryfile. (R) **3.35** Holby City. (R) **4.35** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITY: Bottom Knockor Street. **6.10** Bottom Knockor Street. (R) **6.25** Bottom Knockor Street. **6.40** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.55** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.05** Share a Story. **7.10** Sooty. **7.25** Super 4. **7.40** Matt Hatter Chronicles. **8.00** Marvel Avengers Assemble. **8.30** Fish Hooks. **8.45** Fish Hooks. **9.00** Horrible Science. **9.25** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **10.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **11.25** ITV News: Weather. **11.35** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **12.40** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **1.45** All Star Family Fortunes. (R) **2.25** The X Factor. (R) **4.50** Film: Everything or Nothing: The Untold Story of James Bond. (2012) Premiere. Documentary about the making of the James Bond films.

6.35 Regional Programme: Weather.

6.45 ITV News: Weather.

7.00 Jekyll and Hyde. Robert goes looking for answers in his grandfather's house, and saves the life of a man with connections to his family. Ravi braves the undead to bring news from Ceylon.

8.00 The X Factor. Caroline Flack and Olly Murs present the results of last night's live shows, with the lowest scoring acts being challenged to take part in a sing-off to avoid elimination.

9.00 Downton Abbey. The Crawleys watch Henry compete in a motor racing event, an occasion that leaves Mary reeling. Violet hatches a plan which surprises the family and delights Miss Denker, and learns more about Amelia's intentions in befriending Isobel. Molesley and Daisy rise to the challenges of examination day, Andy's secret is brought to light, Thomas feels isolated, and Mrs Patmore and Mrs Hughes teach Carson a lesson.

10.05 ITV News: Weather.

10.20 Bond Girls Are Forever. A bevy of Bond girls reveal what it's like to win a coveted role as the suave superspy's love interest. With contributions from Honor Blackman, Halle Berry and Ursula Andress. (R)

11.20 The Chase. Bradley Walsh presents as four contestants answer general knowledge questions and work as a team to take on ruthless quiz genius the Chaser and secure a cash prize. (R)

12.15 Jackpot247. **3.00** Motorsport UK. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.15 How I Met Your Mother. (R) **6.40** Cycling: Six Day London. **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** Film: The Legend of Zorro. (2005) Swashbuckling adventure sequel, starring Antonio Banderas. **3.00** Film: The Core. (2003) Sci-fi thriller, starring Aaron Eckhart. **5.40** Channel 4 News.

6.05 A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. Sara Damerji helps Liverpool couple Peter and Sue Keegan find a home in Sarasota, Florida, on their budget of £190,000.

7.00 Restoring Britain's Landmarks. Alastair Dick-Cleland oversees the restoration of a famous old lighthouse on Lundy Island, while John Everts hand-crafts three Georgian fireplaces for Belmont House in Lyme Regis, but he has to ensure he remains within budget. In Fox Hall in Sussex, Anna Keay reveals the must-have gadget for the Georgian aristocrat, looking at why it took thirty years and the help of Big Ben's old engineer to restore it. (R)

8.00 Great Canal Journeys. Timothy West and Prunella Scales travel from Birmingham to Braunston to attend a festival of vintage canal boats, aided on the tricky journey by their son Sam and Juliet. Timothy's daughter from his first marriage. Along the way, they meet a 78-year-old boatman, who reveals how he was born on a canal boat, and unveil a plaque dedicated to a woman who dedicated her life to preserving Britain's canals.

9.00 Homeland. Carrie finds the answers she seek continue to elude her as she ends up in an unexpected situation. Meanwhile, Saul and Allison run an operation.

10.05 Gogglebox. Capturing the households' instant reactions to what they are watching on TV from the comfort of their own sofas. Narrated by Caroline Aherne. (R)

11.10 Film: Warm Bodies. (2013) A zombie falls in love with a woman after eating her boyfriend's brain, and starts to regain human feelings. Romantic comedy horror, starring Nicholas Hoult.

1.00 Grand Designs Australia. **1.55** Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners. (R) **2.50** Come Dine with Me. (R) **4.40** Food Unwrapped. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) **6.20** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **6.35** Bob the Builder. (R) **6.45** Ticky Toc. (R) **6.55** Zack and Quack. (R) **7.10** Make Way for Noddy. (R) **7.20** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.35** Little Princess. (R) **7.45** Pip Ahoy! (R) **8.00** Blaze and the Monster Machines. **8.20** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **8.40** Wandana and the Alien. (R) **8.55** Toby's Travelling Circus. (R) **9.10** Jelly Jamm. (R) **9.30** LazyTown. (R) **9.55** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. **10.30** Football League Tonight. (R) **11.55** Ice Road Truckers. (R) **12.55** Ice Road Truckers. (R) **1.50** Ice Road Truckers. (R) **2.50** Film: Haunted Honeymoon. (1986) Comedy, starring Gene Wilder. **4.25** Film: High Spirits. (1988) Supernatural comedy, starring Peter O'Toole.

6.15 Film: Addams Family Values. (1993) Spooky couple Gomez and Morticia hire a nanny to look after their new baby son – and stop him suffering an early death at the hands of his jealous elder siblings. Romance soon blossoms between the new childminder and Uncle Fester, but he does not realise she is planning to kill him once she has got hold of the family fortune. Comedy sequel, starring Anjelica Huston, Raul Julia, Christopher Lloyd, Christina Ricci and Joan Cusack.

7.55 5 News Weekend.

8.00 Film: Arachnophobia. (1990) A mild-mannered doctor sets up practice in a small town, but a cloud gathers over his career due to a series of unexplained deaths. Before long, he has to convince the locals that a horde of venomous spiders is responsible and confront his intense fear of arachnids into the bargain. Comedy horror, starring Jeff Daniels, John Goodman, Julian Sands and Brian McNamara. Edited for language.

10.05 The Haunting of Radcliffe House. A couple and their children move to an estate on the Yorkshire moors and are plagued by a series of paranormal events. Supernatural drama, with Olivia Williams and Matthew Modine. (R)

12.00 Film: Poltergeist. (1982) Horror, starring JoBeth Williams. **1.55** SuperCasino. Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team. **4.00** House Doctor. (R) **4.25** Make It Big. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 Top Gear. **8.00** Don't Tell the Bride. **9.00** Russell Howard's Good News. **10.00** Film: Halloween: Resurrection (2002) **11.25** Russell Howard's Good News Extra. **12.10** Family Guy. **12.55** American Dad! **1.15** Rent a Cop. **1.45** Russell Howard's Good News. **2.15** World's Worst Place to Be a Woman – Stacey Dooley Investigates. **3.10** The Fear. **3.40** Sunny D. **4.00** Close

BBC Four
7.00 London on Film: The West End. **7.30** Jacobi on Garrick: Godfather of the British Stage. **8.00** Ronald Harwood in Conversation with Richard Eyre. **9.00** Knights of Classic Drama at the BBC. **11.00** Charles Darwin and the Tree of Life. **11.00** Arena: Screen Goddesses. **12.00** Natural World: Grizzlies of Alaska. **1.00** Timeshift: The British Space Race. **1.40** Bulseyes and Beer – When Darts Hit Britain: Timeshift. **2.40** Ronald Harwood in Conversation with Richard Eyre. **3.40** Close

ITV2
1.30 The Almost Impossible Gameshow. **2.30** Totally You've Been Framed. **2.35** Film: Scooby-Doo (2002) **5.20** Film: Space Jam (1996) **7.05** Film: Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure (1989) **9.00** The Xtra Factor. **10.00** The Ty and Ky Show. **10.30** All About the Bants. **11.00** Film: The Faculty (1998) **1.10** The Ty and Ky Show. **1.35** All About the Bants. **2.00** The Vamps: The Hot Desk. **2.10** Teleshopping

ITV3
2.50 Lewis. **4.50** Midsomer Murders. **6.55** Sunday Night at the Palladium. **7.55** Wycliffe. **9.00** The Nation's Favourite Elvis Song. **10.30** Birds of a Feather. **11.00** A Touch of Frost. **1.10** Film: The Rebel (1961) **2.55** Doctor at Large

ITV4
11.45 Storage Wars: New York. **12.45** Darts: European Championship Live. **5.00** Rugby World Cup Highlights. **6.00** Storage Wars: Texas. **7.00** Darts: European Championship Live. **11.00** Film: Tremors (1989) **12.55** Whisker Wars. **1.55** I Want That Car

E4
4.35 The Big Bang Theory. **8.00** Film: Marley and Me (2008) **10.20** The Inbetweeners. **11.30** The IT Crowd. **12.30** Scream Queens. **1.35** Drifters

Film4
11.15 Escape from the Planet of the Apes (1971) **1.00** Tooth Fairy (2010) **3.05** Sword of Sherwood Forest (1960) **4.40** Five Children and It (2004) **6.25** Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps (2010) **9.00** Friends with Benefits (2011)

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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY
Deadly Revenge, Channel 5, 3.15pm
A woman starts a relationship with a seemingly perfect man who has an intense relationship with his mother. She discovers his only previous girlfriend died mysteriously, and becomes consumed with paranoia as she investigates what became of her. Thriller, starring Alicia Ziegler and Donna Mills. (2013)

TUESDAY
Blackthorn, BBC1, 11.45pm
Butch Cassidy lives in secluded exile in a remote Bolivian village, having survived his supposed last stand. After years away from home, he decides the time has come to return to his family in America, but on the way, he runs into an ambitious young outlaw and is drawn into one last criminal adventure. Western, starring Sam Shepard. (2011)



Erased, Thursday, Channel 5, 10pm

WEDNESDAY
Thirteen Days, BBC1, 11.35pm
Fact-based drama covering the events of the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, when the US and Soviet Union confronted each other with nuclear arsenals primed. An American spy plane observes the Russians installing ballistic missiles in Cuba – and over the next 13 days mind games are played out in Washington amid unbearable tension, as President Kennedy comes into conflict with the warmongering military. Starring Kevin Costner and Bruce Greenwood. (2000)

THURSDAY
Erased, Channel 5, 10pm
Premiere. An ex-CIA operative discovers his former employers want him dead, and have erased all records of his existence. Action thriller, with Aaron Eckhart and Olga Kurylenko. (2012)

FRIDAY
Cemetery Junction, BBC1, 11.50pm
A young man in 1970s Reading starts to question what he wants out of life, but finds his friends happy with their lot. He starts a new job selling insurance door to door, only to run into an old girlfriend – who he learns is the daughter of his new boss and engaged to the co-worker showing him the ropes. Comedy drama, starring Christian Cooke. (2010)

Joanna is All Shook Up in her personal journey

If he had lived, Elvis Presley would now be 80 years old.
It may be hard to picture the King as an octogenarian, but his fans do have plenty of other iconic images to remember him by. Some will always see him as the young, swivel-hipped rocker who took audiences by storm in the 1950s, while others picture the leather-clad veteran of the '68 comeback special, or the showman of the Vegas years.
For Joanna Lumley, who has been a loyal subject of the King ever since she bought a copy of Hound Dog, his look was part of his enduring appeal, and has even been an influence on one of her own most famous performances.
She says: "The thing about being a fan of Elvis is that you just love everything about him. I loved the way he looked, the way he sang, the way he dressed, the photographs of him, the way he performed on stage...and I loved his smile and his sense of humour."

"I love the fact that he never really grinned huge cheesy grins, he had a special Elvis grin, and I borrowed that for Patsy in Absolutely Fabulous...a little tribute to Elvis."
But now she is on a mission to put aside her own image of him and get to the truth behind the legend.
She explains: "My Elvis was this young one, before the jumpsuits and the big lifestyle. But what was he really like? If my dream had come true and he had come over to England and I had met him, I wonder would I have liked the boy buried underneath the myth? I'm going in search of the youth catapulted to fame and fortune."
As you might expect, it's a journey that takes in a trip to his home, Graceland, where she receives a personal tour from Elvis's ex-wife, Priscilla Presley.
Joanna says: "The TV room, the living room, Elvis's jungle-themed den, are virtually untouched. His mother's bedroom is still as it was."

It's open to the public, but tonight, Priscilla and I will be alone, with her memories."
However, the presenter soon discovers that Graceland is very different from the rocker's first home, as she visits a shack that his father, Vernon, built for the family in Tupelo, Mississippi. "They were dirt poor," Joanna points out. "It's extraordinary to think that this was where he was born."
There will be more revelations as she talks to his family and friends, charts his rise to fame, and pays a visit to legendary Sun Studios, where he made his first ground-breaking recordings. She also learns more about how his fans and those close to him reacted to his tragic death in 1977.
While Joanna will never get to meet the man himself, she discovers that his legacy does live on, as she calls in on another famous studio, Abbey Road, where a 'new' Elvis album is being made.



Joanna Lumley, Elvis and Me, Wednesday, ITV, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY
Simply Nigella, BBC2, 8.30pm
Fed up with a cereal for breakfast? Then chances are you need to spice up the most important meal of the day with a little inspiration. Try avocado toast with radishes instead. Yes, it might sound a little out there, but as Nigella Lawson proves in this new series, anything goes when it comes to making tasty and original dishes. The journalist and presenter reveals that what people cook and how they prepare it really can make them feel better and more alive. Also on the menu this week is a Thai noodle dish with cinnamon and prawns, and a laid-back family supper of seeded lamb ribs, served with a feta and avocado salad. And if that leaves you hungry for more, she will also be whipping up warm-spiced cauliflowers and chicksalad as well as an apricot almond cake. Bon appetit.

TUESDAY
The Great Pottery Throw Down, BBC2, 9pm
New series. Sara Cox invites 10 home pottery enthusiasts to gather in Stoke-on-Trent, where they take part in a competitive throwing contest to determine which of them should be named Top Potter. Through a series of 18 challenges, taking

place over the course of 35 days, the competitors will be judged on their craft skills and creativity by ceramic artist Kate Malone and master potter Keith Brymer Jones. The competition gets under way as the amateurs take part in a four-day assignment, in which they must produce a set of stackable kitchen bowls from lumps of earthenware clay. They also face a Spot Test, in which they must attach handles to 20 mugs within a strict time limit, and a Throw Down, where the judges ask them to make as many egg-cups as they can within 20 minutes.

WEDNESDAY
Dominic Sandbrook: Let Us Entertain You, BBC2, 9pm
New series. Dominic Sandbrook explores British post-war culture, arguing that although it is indebted to the Victorian past, it is a crucial part of modern identity. In the first edition, Dominic examines the way in which culture has become one of Britain's newest exports, claiming that it is an industry in itself, in the same way as shipbuilding and textile production. He suggests that cultural revolution has occurred in the old industrial regions, taking influence from

the former connections of the Empire, as well as the global cultural capital, London.

My Psychic Life, Channel 4, 10pm
Documentary following psychic mediums in the north of England, who reveal what life is like for those who claim they can talk to the dead.
Reports suggest that one in three British people have visited a clairvoyant or medium, with believers claiming it offers them solace, and others insisting it is hocus pocus.
In terms of business, romance, or simply a trip to the shops, the programme explores whether life is made any easier – or indeed more complicated – by having a supposed direct line to the spirit world.



Simply Nigella, Monday, BBC2, 8.30pm

THURSDAY
George Clarke's Amazing Spaces, Channel 4, 8pm
If you were hoping to see the last in the current run a week ago, then the scheduling folks decided to prolong the agony a little longer. Now we finally get to see the series finale, in which the amiable host meets a father and daughter who are turning an American school bus into a festival campervan. He also heads off to Germany to meet a young dad who has turned a grain silo into a home. However, the question on many a fan's lips is: will George and Will's floating beach hut work? After months of construction work, the moment of truth finally arrives as it is launched onto the open sea. However, Will has come up with a contingency plan just in case; he has added an escape pod made from an old bath.

FRIDAY
Ice Road Truckers, Channel 5, 8pm
The drivers for trucking companies VP Express and Polar Industries are put to the test when the winter presents an even bigger adversary – the Polar Vortex, bringing with it the worst winter conditions in a century. With the storm due, Lisa Kelly and Darrell Ward return to lead team Polar to victory.

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CHRONICLE

Christmas Card Challenge

The Advertising Department set school kids from **Thorns Primary School** the Christmas Card Challenge and on pages 18 and 19 we have printed their superb designs. Now all we want you to do, is choose your favourite and send your nomination to us. The designer with the most votes will be presented with their Christmas Card, framed and will receive a set of cards to send out to their family and friends.

As part of the prize, we will donate £50 towards the School Funds

Please send your completed nomination form to:
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Thank you for voting!

Closing date for nominations is Friday 6th November. Nominations from under 16s will require a parents'/guardians' signature. Photocopies of this nomination form will not be accepted. Only one nomination per household. Competition entrants may not vote for their own entry. The winner will be the child with the most entries. In the event of a tie an independent representative will decide.

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★ **Turn to pages 18 and 19 to view entries**

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Superb period residence with adjoining cottage



THIS substantial, double-fronted, period family home in Beech Road, Norton, Stourbridge, is near Mary Stevens Park.

Despite requiring some sympathetic renovation, it is tremendously versatile and having an adjoining cottage, and is for sale through Taylors at £450,000.

The main property has an initial hall with Minton floor tiling, a reception hall with stairs off, a sitting room with a bay window, a further sitting room, a central hall, a study/hobbies room with wood panelling and feature tiled fireplace, a dining room, a breakfast kitchen with a door to a courtyard, side porch/verandah, a cellar, four first-floor bedrooms, nursery room/bedroom six, a shower room and bathroom. The cottage has a hall area, L-shaped dining area with kitchen, sitting room, cupboard/possible study, a bedroom, bathroom, further possible bedroom/loft space, gardens and outbuildings. Call 01384 395555 or visit www.taylors-estateagents.co.uk



Four-bed detached in pleasing location

A WELL-designed Morris-built four-bed-roomed detached house in the Bramhall design, 3 Leagate Avenue, Stourport-On-Severn lies in a pleasing location within the desirable development.

It is for sale through Allan Morris at £234,950. With well stocked gardens it has an inviting reception hall, guest WC, a spacious large lounge with a square bay window and flame-effect fire and double doors to the dining room, a breakfast kitchen with hob, extractor and eye-level oven and grill, utility, galleried landing, main bedroom en suite, three further bedrooms, bathroom and a driveway.

Contact Allan Morris on 01562 747755 or visit www.allan-morris.co.uk



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Guide Price £200,000 - £250,000

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Guide Price £50,000 - £75,000

Chaucer Crescent, K'minster DY10 3XF



Located overlooking open fields to the rear, a three bedroom semi-detached house requiring refitting/refurbishment to current tastes. Porch. Through Living Room/Dining Room. Kitchen. Bathroom. Separate w.c. Driveway & Garage. Excellent potential. EPC E

Guide Price £120,000 - £130,000

Poplar Rd, Kidderminster DY11 6ND



A substantial traditionally built semi-detached house. Hall. Living Room. Dining Kitchen. Scullery. Rear Verandah/Porch with cloakroom/w.c. off. Two Bedrooms. Bathroom. Garage to side. Good sized Gardens. Driveway/off-street parking to front. Requires refitting/refurbishment to current tastes. Immense potential. Suit investor/owner occupier etc. EPC E

Guide Price £80,000 - £95,000

Blackwell St Kidderminster DY10 2EE



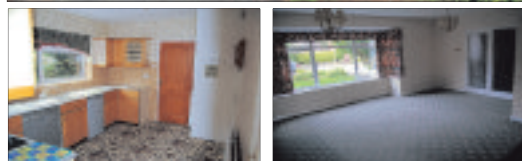
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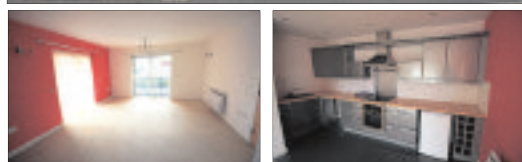
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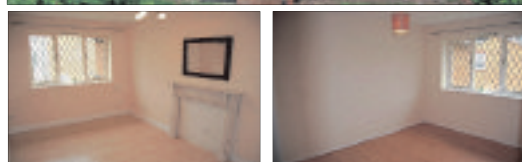
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A Prestigious four bedroom detached property situated in a highly desirable residential location with accommodation to comprise of: Entrance hall, downstairs cloakroom, lounge/diner, kitchen, utility room, four bedrooms and bathroom. The property further boasts gas central heating, double glazing, garage, private driveway affording off road parking, carport, lawned foregarden and rear lawned garden with patio. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = F
DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO
£1200PCMDPOSIT£1300●FEES



THE EMBANKMENT MERRY HILL

A well presented two bedroom, first floor apartment located on the Merry Hill Centre, Accommodation comprises of Communal entrance, Private entrance hall with video entry phone, Open plan lounge/ kitchen, bathroom and two bedrooms, master having en-suite shower room. The property further benefits from having double glazing, electric heating, secure gated parking for one vehicle and communal grounds. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING: D DSS:NO PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO CHILDREN: NO
£550PCMDPOSIT £650 ● FEES



DADFORD VIEW BRIERLEY HILL

An extremely well presented one bedroom first floor flat situated in a popular residential location. Accommodation comprises of Lounge, kitchen, bedroom and bathroom. The property further benefits from electric heating and allocated parking.
UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = E DSS:NO PETS:NO CHILDREN: NO SMOKERS:NO
£395.00PCMDPOSIT £495 ● FEES

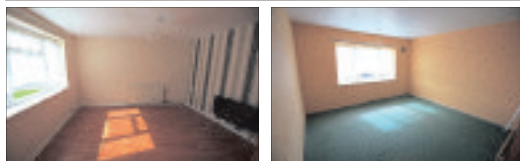
HUNGARY HILL STOURBRIDGE



A two bedroom semi detached property situated in a popular residential location with accommodation to comprise of: Hall, lounge, breakfast kitchen, utility room, two bedrooms, bathroom, front and rear gardens and garage. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = AWAITING DSS:NO PETS: MAY CONSIDER CHILDREN MAY CONSIDER SMOKERS: NO

£595PCMDPOSIT £695 ● FEES

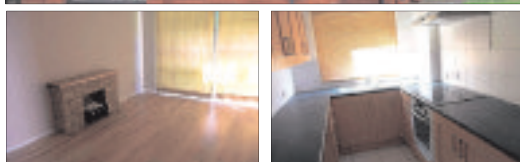
PROPERTY OF THE WEEK



HILLWOOD ROAD HALESOWEN

A Well presented three bedroom semi detached property situated in a popular residential location with accommodation to comprise of: Entrance hall, lounge, dining room, kitchen, rear lobby, three bedrooms and bathroom. The property further benefits from having gas central heating, double glazing and front and rear gardens. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = AWAITING DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO

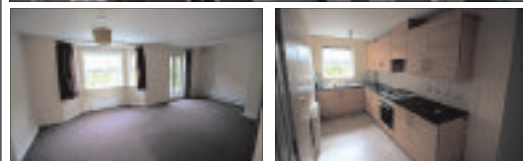
£550PCMDPOSIT £650 ● FEES



STATION ROAD OLD HILL

A purpose built one bedroom ground floor apartment. The accommodation comprises: Lounge, kitchen, Utility room, bedroom and bathroom. The property further benefits from having storage cupboards, gas fired central heating, off road parking and communal gardens. UNFURNISHED EPC Rating = D
DSS: NO CHILDREN: NO PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO

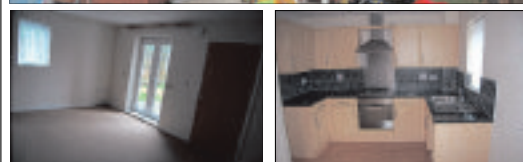
£400.00PCMDPOSIT £500 ● FEES



TREFOIL GARDENS AMBLECOTE

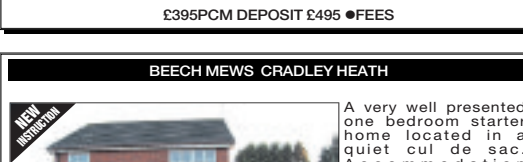
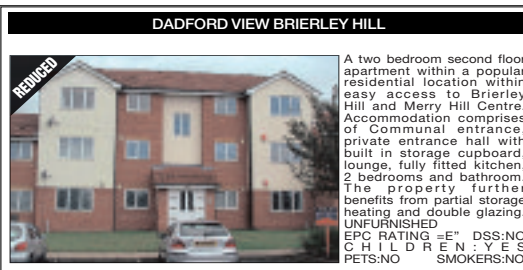
A well presented two bedroom first floor apartment situated close to Stourbridge Town Centre The accommodation comprises of: Communal Entrance hall, private entrance hall, kitchen, lounge/ diner, two bedrooms master with en suite and bathroom. The property further benefits from having gas central heating, double glazing, allocated parking and communal gardens. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = C DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO

£575PCMDPOSIT £675 ● FEES



CLARENCE STREET UPPER GORNAL

A well presented two bedroom property situated in a popular residential location. The accommodation comprises of entrance, lounge, fitted kitchen, bathroom, and two bedrooms. The property further benefits from gas central heating, double glazing and allocated parking. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = C DSS: MAY CONSIDER PETS: NO CHILDREN: YES SMOKERS: NO
£525pcmd Deposit £625 ● FEES



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A two bedroom second floor apartment within a popular residential location within easy access to Brierley Hill and Merry Hill Centre. Accommodation comprises of Communal entrance, private entrance hall with built in storage cupboard, lounge, fully fitted kitchen, 2 bedrooms and bathroom. The property further benefits from partial storage heating and double glazing. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = E DSS:NO CHILDREN: YES PETS:NO SMOKERS:NO

£395PCMDPOSIT £495 ● FEES



BEECH MEWS CRADLEY HEATH

A very well presented one bedroom starter home located in a quiet cul de sac. Accommodation comprises of lounge, kitchen, bathroom and bedroom. The property further benefits from double glazing and gas central heating. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING - D DSS:NO PETS:NO CHILDREN:NO SMOKERS:NO

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ASX is back in contention

By John Griffiths

It's hard to come up with just one reason for the phenomenon, but there's no doubt that the car buying public's love affair with 'cross-over' vehicles has made them the biggest-sellers in the market.

It's probably a combination of purposeful looks, the high 'command' driving position and the prospect of some off-road and winter weather potential, but sales are still growing and so are the number of models available.

Mitsubishi's offering is the ASX: not new exactly, but now a second generation model with a raft of upgrades is now taking to the roads of Britain. It does stand out from the herd, not least because of its pedigree. Mitsubishi has a wealth of experience in producing four wheel drive cars and this family-orientated model is based on the same platform as the iconic, high performance Lancer Evolution.

It comes with three engine options: a 1.6 petrol, a brand new and highly efficient 1.6 turbo diesel and, in top of the range versions only, a 2.2 diesel mated to a six-speed automatic transmission.

It's front end is particularly distinctive due to its large radiator grille set in a softer, more rounded shape made largely with impact-absorbing plastic panels – saving weight and, in the worst case scenario, possibly lives as it is designed to reduce injuries in a pedestrian collision. Yet it still has the stronger lines of a tradition SUV, rather than a family hatchback on steroids. This is reinforced by the impressive ground clearance and protective black plastic panels on the lower edges. It's a full five-seater with a light and airy cabin, a family-sized boot and it is well-equipped with quality trim.

Prices are competitive, with the top of the range ZC-H – with four wheel drive, the most powerful 2.2 litre diesel and automatic transmission – at £24,899.

At the other end of the scale, the 1.6 litre, 115bhp petrol front wheel drive model comes in at a modest £14,999. The 2.2 auto is nippy with a 0 to 62mph time of 10.8 seconds, and an official average fuel consumption of 48.7mpg CO2 rating 157g/km).

During my test I managed a very reasonable 37mpg on two runs across the West Midlands in the rush hour, and 44mpg during mixed town and country driving.

Improved

Weight saving, has of course played its part in the improved performance/economy combination, as has the advanced four wheel drive system. On models which have this improved system, you'll normally be perfectly happy with the fuel-saving front wheel drive option. But if conditions get slippery you only have to press a button and you're in 'auto' mode, where torque is automatically distributed between axles according to driving style and conditions – when the front wheels start to slip, for example. Anything between two and 50 per cent of the torque can be transferred to the rear axles virtually instantly.

Press the button again and you have four wheel drive locked in, for snow or the occasion off-road foray. When a higher proportion of torque is fed to the rear,

Electric power steering and a regenerative braking system also help to save fuel.

The six-speed auto transmission has three modes: 'eco' and sport plus sport with manual changes via paddles behind the steering wheel. In sport mode, the system allows you to use the higher rev ranges before changing up, and changes down more readily, too.

But to be honest, conscious of economy I



stuck almost entirely with 'eco' mode as the 2.2 turbo diesel has plenty of low range torque and is impressively responsive to 'kick-down', allowing you to surge ahead of slower traffic.

The suspension is longer-travel and a little beefier than a standard saloon, reflecting its off-road potential, but it is well damped so it doesn't crash over badly surfaced roads.

The ASX has a longish wheelbase, relative to its size, and together with its lighter weight this has helped to sharpen up its handling. Driver and passengers sit tall with large areas of glass under that large, panoramic glass roof which adds to the feeling of space.

Air conditioning and a new entertainment, satnav and communications system based

around a centre console screen, which also shows you a rear view as soon as you select reverse. There are remote controls for the communications/stereo on the steering wheel, too, as well as the simple to operate cruise control.

The ASX was awarded a five-star EuroNCAP safety rating, helped by an array of technology to prevent or reduce the effects of a collision. This includes active stability control, traction control, hill start assist, ABS with electronic brake force distribution, emergency stop signal activation and no less than seven airbags.

It's likely the biggest seller will be Mitsubishi's new 1.6 turbo diesel, which with 112bhp and well over twice the torque of its petrol stablemate, is only fractionally behind the flag-

ship 2.2 auto in performance terms. But it's the winner in terms of fuel and tax costs with figures of 61.4mpg and 119g/km in two wheel drive versions, and 56.5mpg and 132g/km for the 4WD model.

The boot has 419 litres of space (plus an underfloor compartment) which increases to 1,193 litres if you fold down the rear seats.

The ASX has purposeful looks which help to set it apart from its growing band of competitors and the latest upgrades in economy, safety and technology have brought it back into contention with some of the newer rivals launched in the last couple of years.

Space, comfort and an upmarket feel add to its proven competence.

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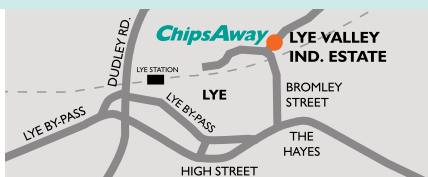
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Stylish and a good drive

By Bob Hickman

The latest Clio is a curvaceous, sleek coupe style vehicle. It's the fourth generation and Renault has worked hard to ensure that the Clio retains its brand loyalty but also capitalises and gains more buyers in the hotly competitive super mini category.

You only need to glance at the Clio to see that it is stylish. Bright LED daytime running lights add emphasis and the hidden rear door handles make the vehicle look virtually coupe-like – disguising the fact that this is a five-door hatch.

The new Clio is both wider, longer and lower, with an extended wheelbase which translates to more interior space.

Thanks to clever engineering and new materials it is 100 kgs lighter than its predecessor and this relates to lower running costs.

Described as a super-mini, the Clio can accommodate five adults, although if like me they are six-footers they will struggle just a little bit for legroom.

The rear is reasonably big enough for the external size of the vehicle and the boot, whilst not over generous, has the ability to be extended if only driver and passenger are contained. There is also a 60/40 split facility.

It is over 22 years since Clios first arrived and with more than 11.5 million sold in over 115 countries, Renault has obviously got something right with this popular vehicle.

My Clio was equipped with a 1.5-litre diesel engine. This develops 90 bhp, suf-

ficient to give a top speed where necessary and legal, of 112 mph and a 0-60 gallop in marginally over 11 seconds.

One of the important figures is the CO2 emissions and at 90 g/km, this is in vehicle excise duty band A which means no vehicle excise licence.

Renault claim extraordinary figures of 78.5 mpg – the computer told me at the end of a week of very mixed mileage that I had achieved 57 miles to the gallon which I found to be perfectly acceptable in real world driving.

The 1.5 DCi performs adequately without being overly noisy, although there is no mistaking that it is diesel power under the bonnet.

Dynamics

The gearbox was notchy and fifth gear was not particularly comfortable at a speed of anything less than 40 mph.

I particularly liked the driving dynamics of the vehicle. The steering wheel was chunky and large, and didn't obscure the graphics which were contained in a binnacle in front of the driver and also in the centre console. My particular vehicle, the Media Nav, had an excellent system directly in front and to the left, regrettably as with most of these systems it did mean averting the eye on occasions to operate the touchscreen system.

One particular feature that I would like to highlight and found to be very, very useful were the cruise control and speed limiter buttons located in the central console just in front and below the handbrake. Move the switch forward and you could dial in a speed limit, click it backwards and it activated cruise control and then one button on the steering wheel to alter the speed.

In this day and age of speed cameras, it was an absolute boon. On motorways with



'New Clio not only looks great but is an excellent vehicle to drive and I am sure will continue to give new owners a welcome and rewarding experience.'

temporary restrictions you dial in the speed, and in and around town it is quite easy to dial in a speed and avoid those hefty penalties for exceeding the speed limit.

The Clio's ride and handling were one of a vehicle at ease within its own suit – it was compliant as you would expect, steering at all times was balanced and the car turned in and held its line perfectly on reasonably twisty B Class roads and had a degree of accuracy and poise which was a rewarding feature.

The new Clio not only looks great but

is an excellent vehicle to drive and I am sure will continue to give new owners a welcome and rewarding experience. It is cheap to run and with a distinct abhorrence of fuel stations with the 1.5-litre DCi I have little doubt that the new generation of Clio will add to the already 11.5 million owners that Renault have achieved in the previous 22 years.

My particular car had an on the road price of £16,595, a four-year 100,000 miles warranty, service intervals at 18,000 miles or one-year and in addition a four-year roadside cover is incorporated.

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HYUNDAI SANTA FE 2003, Metallic red, electric windows & mirrors, air con, service history, remote locking MoT. £1,495 07973 614937.

JAGUAR XJ6, 3.2 litre, R reg, 4 months MoT, 96k miles, £600 ono. Call for more details on 07594 269837.

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NISSAN MICRA 1.0, 4-Dr, W reg, silver, 63,000 miles, 7 months MoT. Good runner, £299. Telephone 07364 997652.

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RENAULT MEGANE, 1.6, 56 plate, 5-dr, black, manual, 63,000 miles, long MoT, E/W, PAS, A/C, good condition. £1,150. 07838 897643.

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For convenience you may fax any advertising requirements to

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or email **marie.hogg@expressandstar.co.uk** (remember to include a name/contact number for confirmation of receipt)

CLARICE WOODHOUSE (Deceased)

Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the aforementioned deceased, late of 22 St. Saviours Court Worcester Road Hagley Stourbridge West Midlands DY9 0QH, who died on 29/07/2015, are required to send particulars thereof in writing to the undersigned Solicitors on or before 08/01/2016, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to claims and interests of which they have had notice.

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DAVID GERALD OAKES (Deceased)

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10 Personals
personal
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Glassboys deserve all the credit, says skipper

SKIPPER Stuart Pierpoint reckons Stourbridge deserve all the credit for Saturday's FA Cup win over Kidderminster Harriers – despite admitting victory was 'as comfortable as it gets'.

The Glassboys marched into the first round proper for the fourth time in seven seasons as they brushed aside their higher-ranked rivals 3-0 at the War Memorial Ground.

And while much of the focus fell on the dire performance of Harriers, who remain without a win this season, Pierpoint believes Stour's part in their downfall should not be ignored.

"We can't get away from the fact we played well too," said Pierpoint. "We are not going to do ourselves justice by saying they were poor." OK, they (Kidderminster) did not play to their maximum but we affected that as well. It was a well deserved win."

Goals from Matt Dodd and former Harriers favourite Justin Richards put the Glassboys two up inside the opening 15 minutes in front of 2,032 at Amblecote.

Chris Lait's second half strike increased the margin of victory for Stour and the misery for the visitors.

"The first goal was massive because it knocked them back a bit and from there, it was comfortable as it gets, which was a bit surprising," added Pierpoint.

"We are full of confidence at the minute. When the draw came out we knew we had a chance and enough quality to hurt them."

"It was important we started fast and quickly. We didn't give them time to relax."

Pottinger proud of Heathens



Max Clegg, red, and Richard Andrews, yellow

CRADLEY boss Will Pottinger said he was proud of his side despite their Knockout Cup Final agony at the hands of Eastbourne.

With the future of the world famous club in jeopardy, the injury-hit Heathens came within a whisker of bowing out in style before losing 47-43.

Needing to become the first side this year to defeat the Eagles at Arlington to retain their crown, their hopes appeared slim as they slipped 12 points behind early on.

However, they launched a dramatic late surge to force a last-heat decider before narrowly missing out on an unforgettable triumph.

Although disappointed to miss out on some silverware to end what has been a tough season, team manager Pottinger was full of praise for the valiant efforts of his depleted side.

"Of course it's disappointing to lose on aggregate by such a small margin, but I'm very proud of all the lads," Pottinger said. "Although we would have liked to end the season

with a major piece of silverware we certainly can hold our heads up high after that performance."

No.1 Max Clegg once again led by example, recording three vital race wins early on to keep his side in touching distance and guesting at No.3 Danny Ayres impressed with 11 points.

Arron Mogridge joined with young reserve Jack Smith for a dramatic 5-1 in the penultimate race to set up a nervy finale, and it was a brave performance to end the campaign.

Stourbridge show growing confidence



Stour lock forward Chris Depper secures Billy Harding's lineout throw

Huddersfield 20 Stourbridge 29
STOURBRIDGE'S National 2 North campaign continues to grow in confidence, a bonus-point victory secured against opponents who did the double over them last season.

Quick ball moved wide saw winger Josh Trinham cross in the corner early on, followed soon after by No.8 Connor Nicholls after a powerful surge by the Stour pack saw the hosts cough up their own short-range scrum feed.

Fullback Tom Mitchell landed both difficult conversions and then extended the lead with a penalty.

With the half time whistle imminent outside half Chris Scott's neat cross field kick secured the third try when it found veteran winger Nathan Bressington clear in Huddersfield's in-goal.

Protracted

The hosts fought back with a protracted second half siege of the Stour goal line, but despite the loss of Bressington to the sin bin the well organised Stour defences held firm.

Rare forays to the hosts' 22 proved fruitless until a break-out saw the hosts' fullback Lewis Workman



Stour lock forward Chris Depper takes the ball into contact at Huddersfield

yellow carded when Trinham was taken out chasing a kick ahead.

Stour pressed the attack and with less than 5min to go were awarded a short range scrum. With the fresh legs of replacement loosehead Adam Sturdy leading the drive Stour secured the bonus point with a penalty try award after the hosts' pack disintegrated.

With the job seemingly done Stour lost focus, errors handing Huddersfield two breakaway tries in the dying minutes, but it was too little too late for the hosts and Stour too all five league points.

Lions give up 13-point lead to lose the game

Old Yardleians 21 Lions 13

THE squad was missing around half a dozen players through injury and absence but could still field the most powerful front row this season and had seemingly adequate cover in most positions.

Despite this, they allowed a strong position at half time, when 13-0 up and commencing the second half downhill to end in a frustrating defeat.

The game began with the Lions pressing the home defence and this was rewarded by a fine try by Duncan Chance down the left.

On 15 minutes a penalty by Sam Wilson increased the lead to eight points.

Just before the break the Lions broke out, Chance hacked on and Will Fallows pounced for a fine try, again on the left.

The score was 13-0 at the half with the Lions seemingly in command.

The second half proved a disaster – the home outfit scoring a converted try almost immediately after the whistle blew.

A poor pass from the ruck left Wilson with a kick that was charged down, resulting in another try for Yards near the posts, again converted for a lead of 14-13 to the home side.

At last the Lions began to show some urgency and launched a series of attacks, a couple close to the home line but again indiscretions or mistakes under pressure left them pointless.

Eventually, with around 5 minutes left, more missed tackles resulted in a high kick into the Lions' 22 where the ball was dropped.

The home scrum half hacked the ball through and scored.

Nest reserves see the lead snatched away

Wrens Nest Res 3 Newport 4

WRENS Nest went into the game on the back of a six nil thumping at the hands of Bilbrook FC.

They stormed into the game and found themselves 2-0 up in the first 20 minutes through excellent work between Gilbert, Bratt-Wynton and Morris.

Newport then got three goals back before half time.

The second half was again a tight affair with plenty of chances for both sides and Newport went further ahead when a cross was converted to make it 4-2.

Wrens Nest caused late drama when they scored a third goal through play between Gwinnell, Bratt-Wynton and Morris which resulted in Morris calmly slotted home for his hat-trick.

Yeltz notch up their second win in a week

Halesowen 2 Skelmersdale 1

HALESOWEN got their second win in a week, beating Skelmersdale 2-1 at home to go ninth in the Evo-Stik Northern Premier table.

It was a good performance by John Hill's men, though Daniel Platt in goal had to make a number of saves.

After a slow opening, Halesowen took the lead on 14 minutes when Aaron Daniels scored.

Skelmersdale worked hard looking for an equaliser in the second half, substitute Louis Corrigan went close but again Platt was in top form.

Halesowen increased their lead on 72 minutes when Reece Hales ran across the edge of the box and shot into the corner of the net.

Skelmersdale captain Robert McIntosh reduced the deficit.

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Sport

Pottinger proud of his Heathens
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Stourbridge sees its confidence grow
Page 35



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Sherwood in tribute to Villa fans

FORMER boss Tim Sherwood has expressed disappointment at his Villa exit – while thanking fans for their ‘passionate support’ during his time at the club.

The 46-year-old, sacked on Sunday after just eight months in charge, broke his silence with a short statement issued through the League Managers Association.

Sherwood, dismissed after a haul of just four points from the opening 10 league games this term, admitted he had ‘learned a lot’ before thanking fans, players and his backroom staff.

“I am very disappointed that I will not be able to carry on in my role as manager of Aston Villa,” he said. “I knew when I took on the role it would be a big challenge, but it proved to be one I greatly enjoyed and I know I have learned a lot.

“I’d like to thank my coaching staff and the staff throughout the club for their dedication, the Villa fans for their passionate support and the players, who gave everything during my time at the club.”

Villa skipper Micah Richards became the latest player to express thanks to Sherwood. The captain posted a message on Twitter which read: “Just want to thank the manager for everything he did. As players we also have to take responsibility and I’ll always appreciate him bringing me to this great club.”

Former Lyon boss Remi Garde meanwhile remains favourite to succeed Sherwood, though talks have reportedly hit a stumbling block over the 49-year-old’s desired backroom staff.

Garde wants to bring former assistants Gerald Batelle and Robert Duverne to England but both are struggling to secure release from Lyon and Metz, their respective current clubs.

Battling Tivs in a triple fightback to share the points

Loughborough Dynamo 3 Tivdale 3
TIVDALE showed a different side to themselves with a steely display and a never say die attitude coming back three times.

All this despite receiving a spate of yellow cards and a straight red.

The home side took the lead in the 32nd minute when the dangerous Leandro Browne played in Luke Edwards and he fired home first time past Turner.

The lead lasted just two minutes when McCormack could only beat away a fierce Sam Adkins drive, but the ball fell kindly to the onrushing midfielder Malachi Farquharson who slalomed the ball home.

On 37 minutes Tivdale were reduced to 10 men when defender Jordan Cullinane-Liburd was shown a straight red.

By this time though Tivdale had three names in the book. From the resulting free kick Luke Edwards prodded home his and Dynamo’s second.Tivdale were back on level terms in the 53rd minute when an Adkins corner was headed home by Sterling. Danny Edwards beat Turner with a terrific drive for Dynamo.

Tivdale equalised for the third time in the 73rd minute through Christ Sterling.

Sykes seals championship success



Richard Sykes on his way to success

STOURBRIDGE rally driver Richard Sykes ended his BTRDA Rally Challenge season in style by finishing second in class on the Cambrian rally and taking the championship win for the class.

On what proved to be a hugely tough event for the 180 crews contesting the rally, Sykes brought his Citroën DS3 home in 21st place overall.

“It was an extremely hard event on both crew and car,” said Sykes. “The stages were the most difficult gravel ones I can remember. I worked massively hard to keep the car on the road, the tracks were very tight and twisty and there were cars going off and suffering mechanical issues all

Rally driving

over the place. We had a great battle for the class win with young Meirion Evans and he drove massively well all day to take the victory, but I was delighted with second in class and 21st overall. My aim for the year was to win the class championship and the result meant we achieved that.”

“We have learnt so much this year with the new car and we’re now ready for the highlight of the season, competing in the national section of Britain’s World Rally Championship round, Wales Rally GB.”

GLASSBOYS IN FIRST ROUND

Stourbridge 3 Kidderminster 0

THERE were two distinct storylines played out at Stourbridge on Saturday.

One was of celebration at a home team who, for the fourth time in seven seasons, are into the first round of the FA Cup.

The other was of despair and no little bewilderment at a new low for Kidderminster Harriers, during a campaign which in the space of just two-and-a-half months has already seen several.

On paper, with the Evo-Stik Northern Premier Glassboys knocking off their National League rivals, this will go down as a shock. To those who have followed the fortunes of both clubs this season it was nothing of the sort.

Even so, cup victories over teams two divisions above can rarely have come easier.

Stourbridge were in such command that even their manager Gary Hackett, having spent most of the week insisting his side were the underdogs, remarked on how comfortable a victory it was.

Limpness

Such was the limpness of Harriers performance that, barely two hours after the final whistle, chairman Rod Brown was accusing players of lacking “passion and desire”.

Head coach Dave Hockaday’s post-game interviews carried the same sentiment, if not language.

Having taken over the Aggborough hotseat earlier this month, the 57-year-old is under no illusions as to the task ahead as he seeks to fashion a team packed with loanees and journeymen into one which can make a fist of surviving in non-league’s top flight.

There cannot be many to have worked under Leeds United chairman Massimo Cellino who have found a tougher job elsewhere. Hockaday, arguably, has done precisely that.

In truth, it was his team selection, most notably the decision to replace Dean Snedker with Alex Palmer in goal, which came under scrutiny. The Albion loanee was at fault twice inside the opening quarter-hour as Stour took control.

First he miscued an attempted punch clear before letting Matt Dodd’s shot squirm under his



Stourbridge celebrates after Chris Lait put the Glassboys 3-0 up. Photo by Will Kilpatrick.

body to give the Glassboys a fifth-minute lead.

Ten minutes later, he remained rooted to the spot as Justin Richards – who later said he expected to get his “head punched off” by the keeper – stole unmarked behind the defence to glance home Leon Broadhurst’s free-kick.

Harriers huffed, puffed and hit the woodwork through Jordan Jones but lacked the intensity of their hosts, who got a third when Chris Lait netted from 25 yards seven minutes after the break.

In the draw for the first round of the cup Stourbridge were handed a long trip to Dover, Port Vale face Maidenhead United, Coventry City v Northampton Town, Walsall v Fleetwood, Shef-

field United v Worcester City, Gainsborough v Shrewsbury, Braintree v Oxford United.

Stourbridge (4-4-2): Solly 6, Green 7, Scarr 7, Pierpoint 6, Smikle 7, Dodd 7 (Wright 88), Tonks 7, Broadhurst 8, Lait 7 (Canavan 64), Hawley 7 (Knight 86), Richards 7. Subs not used: Harris, Wright, Penny, Price (gk).

Harriers (4-3-3): Palmer 4, Hodgkiss 5, Howkins 5, Langmead 3, Young 4, Dinsley 4, Maxwell 5, Whitfield 5, Jones 5 (Hassan 58 5), Styche 5 (Singh 75 5), Francis-Angol 6 (Green 79). Subs not used: Rowe-Turner, Tunnicliffe, Forsyth, Snedker (gk).

Hackett not happy with long journey

STOURBRIDGE boss Gary Hackett admitted a sense of disappointment after his side were handed a long away trip to Dover Athletic in the FA Cup first round.

The Glassboys face a journey of more than 200 miles to the Crabble Athletic Ground where they will face a Dover side currently third in the Vanarama National League.

Hackett’s men could have potentially faced a glamour tie against the likes of Sheffield United, Wigan or neighbours Walsall.

And he joked the trip to Dover is so far, it feels like a European tie.

“It’s so close to France I feel like we have qualified for Europe,” he said.

“When you look at it at first glance it is a little bit of a dampener.

“But when you put it into perspective you realise we are in the first round of the FA Cup and we have a game that we can win.

“That’s the magic of the FA Cup – there is good draws and bad draws.

“Now we need to go and win so we can get one of the bigger clubs in the second round.”

The Glassboys beat rivals Kidderminster 3-0 on Saturday to make it through to the first round proper.

Stourbridge previously reached the FA Cup first round in 2009, 2011 and 2013 and earned a place in the second round on the latter two occasions.

“Dover are going well in their league but we have players who can step up to the plate,” Hackett added.

“We will go down there positively.

“I feel sorry for the fans because it’s a long way.”

All first round ties will be played between November 6 and 9.

Darlo enjoying five games undefeated

Darlaston 4 Wrens Nest 1

DARLASTON are now unbeaten in five games thanks to a 4-1 West Midlands Division One home win over local neighbours Wrens Nest.

Mark Swann’s eighth goal of the season broke the deadlock and the hosts added a second when Swann’s close-range header was blocked but forced home by Ryan McAllister.

Todd Warner halved the arrears but Darlo pushed clear with goals from Leon Taylor and Tyrone Atkinson with a close range effort as the hosts broke the deadlock on 32 minutes. Ryan

McAllister finished the scoring.

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